Expeditionary Culture Field Guide

ANGOLA

U.S. AIR FORCE

About this Guide

This guide is designed to prepare you to deploy to culturally complex environments and achieve mission objectives. The fundamental information contained within will help you understand the cultural dimension of your assigned location and gain skills necessary for success.

The guide consists of 2 parts:

Part 1: Introduces "Culture General," the foundational knowledge you need to operate effectively in any global environment.

Part 2: Presents "Culture Specific" Angola, focusing on unique cultural features of Angolan society and is designed to complement other pre-deployment training. It applies culture-general concepts to

help increase your knowledge of your assigned deployment location (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia).

For further information, visit the Air Force Culture and Language Center (AFCLC) website at http://culture.af.mil/ or contact AFCLC's Region Team at AFCLC.Region@us.af.mil.

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PART 1 – CULTURE GENERAL

What is Culture?

Fundamental to all aspects of human existence, culture shapes the way humans view life and functions as a tool we use to adapt to our social and physical environments. A culture is the sum of all of the beliefs, values, behaviors, and symbols that have meaning for a society. All human beings have culture, and individuals within a culture share a general set of beliefs and values.

Members of a culture also usually assign the same meanings to the symbols in that culture. A symbol is when one thing – an image, word, object, idea, or story – represents another thing. For example, the American flag is a physical and visual symbol of a core American value – freedom. At the same time, the story of George Washington admitting to having chopped down a cherry tree is also symbolic, representing the importance Americans place on personal honesty and leadership integrity.

Force Multiplier

The military services have learned through experience the importance of understanding other cultures. Unlike the 20th-century bipolar world order that dominated US strategy for nearly half a century, today the US military is operating in what we classify as asymmetric or irregular conflict zones where the notion of cross-cultural interactions is on the leading edge of our engagement strategies.

We have come to view the people themselves, rather than the political system or physical environment, as the decisive feature in conflict areas. Our primary objective hinges on influencing constructive change through peaceful means where possible. We achieve this endeavor by encouraging local

nationals to focus on developing stable political, social, and economic institutions that reflect their cultural beliefs and traditions.

Therefore, understanding the basic concepts of culture serves as a force multiplier. Achieving an awareness and respect of a society's values and beliefs enables deploying forces to build relationships with people from other cultures, positively influence their actions, and ultimately achieve mission success.

Cultural Domains

Culture is not just represented by the beliefs we carry internally, but also by our behaviors and by the systems members of a culture create to organize their lives. These systems, such as political or educational institutions, help us to live in a manner that is appropriate to our culture and encourages us to perpetuate that culture into the future.

We can organize these behaviors and systems into categories – what the Air Force refers to as "cultural domains" – in order to better understand the primary values and characteristics of a society. A cross-culturally competent military member can use these domains – which include kinship, language and communication, and social and political systems among others (see chart on next page) – as tools for understanding and adapting to any culture. For example, by understanding the ways different cultures define family or kinship, a deployed military member can more effectively interact with members of that culture.

Social Behaviors Across Cultures

While humankind shares basic behaviors, various groups enact or even group those behaviors differently across cultural boundaries. For example, all societies obtain food for survival, although agrarian societies generally produce their own food for limited consumption using very basic techniques.

Conversely, industrialized nations have more sophisticated

market economies, producing foodstuffs for universal consumption. Likewise, all cultures value history and tradition, although they represent these concepts through a variety of unique forms of symbolism. While the dominant world religions share the belief in one God, their worship practices vary with their traditional historical development. Similarly, in many kin-based cultures where familial bonds are foundational to social identity, it is customary for family or friends to serve as godparents, while for other societies this practice is nearly non-existent.
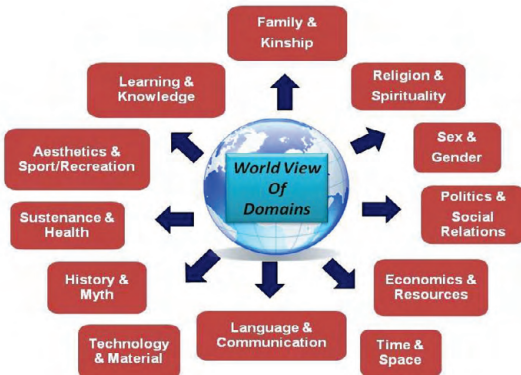
Worldview

One of our basic human behaviors is the tendency to classify others as similar or different according to our cultural standard.

As depicted in the chart below, we can apply the 12 cultural domains to help us compare similarities and differences across cultures. We evaluate others' behavior to determine if they are "people like me" or "people not like me." Consequently, we assume that individuals falling into the "like me" category share our perspectives and values.

This collective perspective forms our worldview– how we see the world and understand our place in it. Your worldview functions as a lens through which you see and understand the world. It helps you to interpret your experiences and the values and behaviors of other people that you encounter. Consider your worldview as a way of framing behavior, providing an accountability standard for our actions and a logical explanation of why we individually or collectively act in a certain manner.

Cultural Belief System

An important component of a worldview is our belief system. A community's belief system sets its universal standards of what is good and bad, defines right and wrong behavior, and assigns a value of meaningful or meaningless. Our beliefs form the fundamental values we hold to be true – regardless of whether there is physical evidence to support these ideas. Beliefs are a central facet of human culture. They are shared views about world order and how the universe was physically and socially constructed.

While all people have beliefs, their specific components tend to vary depending upon respective world views. What people classify as good or bad, right or wrong depends on our deeply-held beliefs we started developing early in life that have help shape our characters. Likewise, these values are ingrained in our personalities and shape our behavior patterns and our self-identities. Because cultural beliefs are intensely held, they are difficult, though not impossible, to change.

Core Beliefs

Core beliefs shape and influence certain behaviors and also serve to rationalize those behaviors. Therefore, knowledge of individual or group beliefs can be useful in comprehending or making sense of their activities. We will use the iceberg model for classifying culture to illustrate two levels of meaning, as depicted. Beliefs and values, portrayed by the
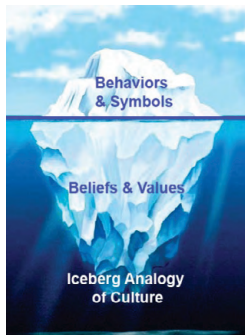
deeper and greater level of the submerged iceberg, are seldom visible, but are indicated / hinted at / referenced by our behaviors and symbols (top level). It is important to recognize, though, that the parts of culture that are not visible (under the waterline) are informing and shaping what is being made visible (above the waterline).

In many cases, different worldviews may present behaviors that are contrary to our own beliefs, particularly in many regions where US forces deploy. Your ability to suspend judgment in order to understand another perspective is essential to establishing relationships with your host-nation counterparts. The ability to withhold your opinion and strive to understand a culture from a member of that culture's perspective is known as cultural relativism. It often involves taking an alternate perspective when interpreting others' behaviors and is critical to your ability to achieve mission success.

As you travel throughout the African Continent, you will encounter cultural patterns of meaning that are common among most African countries. What follows is a general description of 12 cultural domains which are used to frame those commonalities.

CULTURAL DOMAINS

1. History and Myth

History and myth are related concepts. History is a record of the past that is based on verifiable facts and events. Myth can

act as a type of historical record, although it is usually a story which members of a culture use to explain community origins or important events that are not verifiable or which occurred prior to written language.

Africa has a history that spans the entire existence of humankind. In ancient times prior to the emergence of written languages, history and wisdom were preserved across generations and

ethnic boundaries through oral folk legends or myths. Most early human evolution began as hunting and gathering cultures in East and South Africa, with countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa renowned for their early human sites. In the last several millennia, the development of agriculture and pastoralism (animal herding) replaced hunting and gathering lifestyles (Photo: *Kutubiyya Mosque* courtesy of CultureGrams, ProQuest, 2013).

Ancient civilizations evolved in all corners of Africa, inspired in part by peoples from the Middle East bringing trade, beliefs, customs, language, and on occasion, colonization. Far from being isolated empires, the African civilizations were intimately connected by commerce and marriage throughout various regions of the continent, and when confronted by outsiders, managed to adapt to their influences. Eventually, Arab traders introduced Islam to Africa and also instituted the Trans-Saharan African slave trade that lasted from the 7th to 19th Centuries.

The "golden age" of European exploration, which lasted from the 18th to mid-20th century, prompted the wholesale exploitation of Africans resources – first human assets through slavery, followed by natural resources such as minerals, precious gems and metals, and wildlife, thereby diminishing most of what was traditional and African.

The introduction of the European Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade altered the slave trade through both the sheer number of Africans enslaved and through the cementing of a racist ideology of Black inferiority to legitimize the institution of slavery. Slavery decimated the African continent for over 400 years through the forced relocation of an estimated 25 to 30 million Africans worldwide. This figure does not include those Africans who died aboard ships or during capture. While abolition of the slave trade dissolved the institution of slavery, it did not end the European

presence on the African continent nor did it drastically alter their attitudes towards Africans.

Starting in the mid-19th century, European colonialism served to redefine African ethnic relations on a large scale; however, as African societies began to resist colonial rule and seek their independence, widespread ethnic conflict and genocide occurred. Sustained westernization and globalization continue to shape the continent through poverty, disease, and social reform. A history still to be recorded, Africa's future identity faces many challenges in critical areas such as environmental change, ethnic strife, women's health and security, and education.

2.   Political and Social Relations

Political relations are the ways in which members of a community organize leadership, power, and authority. Social relations are all of the ways in which individuals are linked to others in their community.

Traditional African political organizations in the form of bands, tribes, and chiefdoms have existed for several millennia and continue to influence contemporary African governments. Uncommon in modern society, bands are limited to hunting and gathering economies, such as the !Kung of the southern African Kalahari Desert and foragers of central African forests.

Tribes are still represented today across the African political landscape, although the use of the word "tribe" is sometimes misinterpreted due to its western notion of "primitiveness" and oftentimes substituted with the term "ethnic group." Lacking centralized authority, tribes are organized around segmented descent groups or in some cases age groups.

Everyday governance is discharged through councils of respected elders and sanctioned through ritual and other means. East African pastoralist groups such as the Maasai,

along with some West African tribes and the Berbers in North Africa, represent this type of organization.

Chiefdoms or kingdoms are ruled by kings or queens from a royal clan and generally incorporate millions of subjects. Kingdoms such as the Zulu or Swazi in southern Africa developed through conquest, while others like Ghana's Ashante developed through an association of related traditional states. However, colonialism eventually diluted the power and reach of these empires, whose leaders were often retained as indirect rulers or figureheads.

Today, all three of these political organizations still exist, although in the confines of modern African nation-states created by colonial powers who had little regard or understanding of African cultures. This juxtaposition of modernity with tradition has caused severe conflict throughout the continent.

Challenged to construct their respective "national" identities, regional leaders attempt to do so by diluting the traditionally cohesive power of ancestry. These national ruling elites, who derive their power from wealth and commerce rather than tribal affiliation, feel threatened by loyalty to these traditional organizations, labeling their rule as "tribalism."

This "class versus descent" scrimmage for power has resulted in conflicts across the continent and a dramatic divergence of interests. As a means to overcome these and other issues on the continent, a 53-nation federation, the African Union (AU), was formed in 2002. AU's charter is to promote "greater unity and solidarity between African countries and peoples" by building partnerships in all segments of "civil society."

3.   Religion and Spirituality

Religion is a cultural belief system that provides meaning to members of a community. Religious and spiritual beliefs help preserve the social order by defining proper behavior. They also create social unity by defining shared identity, offer

individuals peace of mind, and explain the causes of events in a society. Prior to the arrival of Islam and Christianity, the African continent consisted of orally transmitted indigenous religious practices. As in many societies, African indigenous beliefs influenced diet, subsistence patterns, family structures, marriage practices, and healing and burial processes. In essence, Africans constructed their worldview through their indigenous religions.

Today, the African continent is primarily either Muslim or Christian. Other faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism exist as pockets in different regions of the continent, primarily in urban areas. The historical trajectories of Islamic and Christian expansion in Africa offer intriguing commonalities in how Africans across the continent initially reacted to the introduction of each of those religions. For example, it is common throughout the continent to find a blending of many elements of indigenous religious practices with local Islam and Christianity (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia).

Consequently, many African native religions share similarities with religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in their understanding of God as the creator and ruler of all life, although He is considered untouchable by humans.

However, unlike Christianity and Islam, many African indigenous religions believe that God is not directly involved in people's lives. To them there is a spirit world populated with former good and bad human beings. The good spirits intercede with God on behalf of their living families to whom they then relay God's will through dreams and acquired possessions. The bad spirits work to bring misfortune through sickness,

death, or natural disasters to those who behave inappropriately.

Many indigenous African religions revere "nature" spirits living in the sky, water, and forests. These impersonal spirits help protect people from harm and provide them with life's essential ingredients such as water, sun, and wildlife. This belief system is commonly referred to as animism.

Just as spirits mediate relations between God and humans, religious specialists act as mediators between spirits and humans to provide protection from harm.

4. Family and Kinship

The domain of family and kinship refers to groups of people related through blood ties, marriage, or through strong emotional bonds that influence them to treat each other like family members (often called "fictive kin").The traditional African family with respect to marriage, family structure, and descent is a much different arrangement than is found in most American families. Likewise, there are several components of the traditional African family that are common to all African cultures.

First, perhaps the most difficult feature to reconcile to Americans is that of polygyny – the practice of a husband having more than one wife. A benefit of this arrangement is that it promotes societal alliances through marriage, procreation, and family wealth through female labor.

Second, due to polygyny, the family in most African cultures has historically consisted of an expanded set of kin or relatives that extends well beyond the American notion of a nuclear family. This arrangement created a family environment where children considered all siblings as "brothers and sisters" and all of the wives/mothers as "mother."

Third, the extended African family traces descent through either the male or female side of the family, a practice which differs considerably from the American family. Patrilineal descent (through the male side of the family) is the more common approach and usually features polygyny. The matrilineal (through the female bloodline) marriage pattern is more uncommon and almost always features monogamy – it is rare to encounter a wife having more than one husband.

Lastly, it is common for two or more blood lines (lineages) to share a common ancestor and collectively form a clan, which is the largest social unit. Clans do not have formal leaders or organizational structures. Membership is transferred from father to child and cuts across ethnic and social boundaries.

The dramatic social changes in Africa during and after colonialism in the last 4 decades have obviously affected the traditional family, and variations on these 3 features can be found across the continent.

5. Sex and Gender

Sex refers to the biological/reproductive differences between males and females, while gender is a more flexible concept that refers to a culture's categorizing of masculine and feminine behaviors, symbols, and social roles. Gender roles in Africa follow no single model nor is there a generalized concept of sex and common standard of sexual behavior.

Prehistorically, gender role differentiation in Africa's hunting and gathering cultures was based on a division of labor featuring different, yet complementary, sets of responsibilities for males and females, adults and children. Females gathered

over half the caloric needs from natural vegetation, while also reproducing and raising offspring. Males were primarily hunters but also assisted with gathering.

These gender patterns continued as agricultural practices advanced.

Females shared in farming while continuing to provide for the family's subsistence, and males produced the cash crops. Pastoralists like the Maasai of Kenya traditionally have featured males involved in cattle-raising and females in food production.

The 19th-century European colonial period introduced a cash economy into Africa, with female labor used to produce the cash crops. By inserting male authority over females, colonial administrators disrupted the distinct yet complementary male/female relationship that had been traditionally African.

More recently, western influence across the continent has dramatically altered the traditional gender roles. Educational and professional opportunities for females, along with increased family migrations to urban areas, have radically altered traditional male and female gender roles.

Likewise, the number of singles parents and even child- or other relative-led families has increased with the predominance of HIV/AIDS-related deaths and warfare, further altering traditional gender responsibilities. Additionally, ethnic conflicts involving abuse of women are prevalent in many unstable countries, and while the rubric of traditional African gender generally remains, the forces of change are gradually ripping it away.

6.   Language and Communication

Language is a system for sharing information symbolically, whereby words are used to represent ideas. Communication is

defined as the cultural practice of sharing meaning in interaction, both verbally and non-verbally. America is predominantly a monolingual society, where traditionally, fluency in a second language has been considered a luxury rather than a necessity.

Conversely, national survival for many societies in Africa required them throughout their existence to adopt multilingual

practices, if for no other reason than to preserve their native heritage.

You may find it challenging to comprehend the scope of Africa's linguistic diversity. There are over 2,000 African languages (many spoken-only) from 6 major language families, and perhaps 100 of these languages are used to communicate among the more dominant ethnic groups such as Berber, Swahili, Yoruba, and others.

Official languages of African nation-states are few, yet the linguistic diversity expressed across the continent (Nigeria has 250 languages) has prompted an awareness of the value of Africa's linguistic traditions. While most areas of the continent speak the adopted language of their colonial past – such as French and Portuguese in West Africa, French and Arabic in Morocco, and English in Kenya and South Africa – the majority of people also speak one or more traditional "indigenous" languages of their and other ethnic groups. As African independence spread throughout the continent, ethnic groups continued to depend on their indigenous identifiers, such as language, to celebrate their "release" from colonial rule and to

preserve a sense of indigenous identity.

While communication styles tend to vary by ethnic or social groups, Africans generally are friendly and outgoing people although they tend to communicate with reserve to avoid confrontation. As in most kin-based societies, Africans believe that saving face or protecting one's honor and dignity are of utmost importance; therefore, they avoid public criticism and controversial topics at all costs – even to the extent of withholding their honest opinion or modifying the truth.

Africans admire and even expect extended greetings and small talk, and to attempt to rush or avoid social graces is considered disrespectful. Similarly, Africans avoid direct eye contact when communicating with new acquaintances and people of status,

particularly elders. They also are fond of non-verbal gestures, and it is common throughout African societies for members of the same gender to hold hands or touch while conversing.

7. Learning and Knowledge

All cultures require that the older generation transmit important information to the younger generation. This information can be strictly factual (for example, how to fulfill subsistence and health requirements) and culturally traditional (the beliefs, behaviors, and symbols that have meaning to the community). This knowledge transfer may occur through structured, formalized systems such as schools or through informal learning by watching adults or peers.

The contemporary African educational system hardly resembles the traditional pre-colonial structure, whereby community elders were primarily responsible for preparing youth for adulthood. Their instruction included fundamentals of ethnic ritual and ceremony, along with customary protocol for their distinctive gender roles. A rite-of-passage commemorating their successful journey from childhood to adulthood served as a form of graduation.

European colonialism brought a more structured, formal educational system that catered to a small group of African elite who demonstrated potential to administer expanding colonial territories. Following independence, many African nations adopted the European system because they believed it would prepare them to be more competitive in intra-continental and global marketplaces, thereby enhancing their quality of life.

However, progress in developing and maintaining reliable educational institutions has been slow for a variety of reasons. Since most Africans live in rural environments, they continue to rely heavily on child labor for family survival, resulting in decreased school enrollments or early withdrawals. Likewise, widespread HIV/AIDS epidemics, ethnic conflict, teacher and resource deficits, and inaccessibility to remote rural areas also hamper progress. According to 2005 statistics, only half of the

continent's children were enrolled in primary school, leaving over 40 million African children without any schooling at all.

8.   Time and Space

In every society, people occupy space and time in ways that are not directly linked to physical survival. In low-context western cultures, people tend to be preoccupied with strict time management, devoting less effort to relationship-building. Conversely, most African cultures are traditionally high-context societies, whereby people center their activities on socializing and establishing close associations, having little regard for the passage-of-time.

Only after establishing trust and honor will your typical African counterpart agreeably proceed with business. In his worldview, time is a precious commodity used to establish relationships and form alliances.   Any attempt to accelerate the tempo at the expense of social pleasantries will likely result in deadlock.

To an African, close physical proximity between individuals encourages cooperative trust, and for centuries they have viewed human linkage as a core element to survival. This closeness is best represented in a traditional African village where strong kinship connections are evidenced by a display of close interpersonal relations among family members.

While conventional African concepts of time and space remain intact, throughout the continent western influence and globalization have stepped up the pace of African living, mostly in urban areas. Consequently, rural-to-urban migrations have reshaped traditional social and subsistence patterns.

9.   Aesthetics and Recreation

Every culture has its own forms of creative expression that are guided by aesthetic principles of imagination, beauty, skill and style. Prior to 19th-century European colonization of Africa,

recreation served a vital subsistence role, whereby adolescents and adults alike participated in intellectually stimulating leisurely activities that concurrently served to develop essential hunting and pastoral skills.

Games of chance and skill were important to early childhood development, providing social outlets within and outside their community. Featuring wrestling, jumping and running; traditional African sport was steeped in religious ritual.

Along with colonialism came the introduction to Africa of western sports such as soccer, cricket, rugby and track and field. This emphasis on western sport continued to thrive with African independence and globalization, as seen in sporting events such as the Olympics and the World Cup.

Leaders such as Nelson Mandela skillfully employed sport to promote a unified South African nation. Importing the predominantly "white" game of rugby, Mandela used it to fuse a racially divided country following his election in 1992. This event is the theme of the motion picture "Invictus," exemplifying how sport can serve to create national identities and overcome ethnic division. His efforts have inspired many other African nations to follow suit.

Likewise, East African countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia have produced the world's dominant male and female distance runners, and South Africa, Cameroon and Nigeria emerged as strong contenders in the 2010 World Cup. African nations are now competing in leagues such as the International Basketball Association (FIBA) World Championships, and there is also a

growing number of African basketball players on US college campuses and in the National Basketball Association (NBA).

10. Sustenance and Health

Societies have different methods of transforming natural resources into food. These methods can shape residence patterns, family structures and economics. Theories of disease and healing practices exist in all cultures and serve as adaptive responses to disease and illness.

Despite having only 11% of the global population, Africa is a victim of many of the world's debilitating health disorders. According to the World Health Organization, 60% of the global HIV/AIDS cases and 90% of malarial diseases occur in Africa.

These and other medical conditions are attributed primarily to viral infection and widespread poverty caused by extreme climatic conditions and civil unrest, coupled with inadequate preventative measures. While extensive drought generates widespread famine, civil disturbances generate millions of displaced persons. Likewise, with only 58% of the Sub-Saharan African population having access to safe drinking water, water-born bacterial diseases such as cholera and schistosomiasis are common.

Many people in Africa lack access to western medicine, and as a result depend on traditional health practices to combat disease. In addition, some traditional beliefs run counter to western medical practice and perhaps discourage individuals from utilizing those services even when they are available. This problem is further intensified by lack of federal regulatory healthcare management.

While modern healthcare procedures are more common in urban areas, many rural people rely on traditional practitioners who use a variety of plants and herbs to treat patients. Similarly, many families have their own secret remedies. While in some cases traditional medicine proves effective with fewer side effects than modern drugs, traditional practices do not adequately treat many of the more serious conditions.

On a positive note, western influence has stimulated some progress in combating Africa's health crisis. More resources are devoted to achieving basic human security by assessing disease symptoms early and with scientific accuracy.

11. Economics and Resources

This domain refers to beliefs regarding appropriate ways for a society to produce, distribute, and consume goods and services. Traditionally having an agrarian-based economy, Africa today remains predominantly agricultural, featuring less industrialization than most other parts of the world. Post-colonial adversities such as civil war, disease, poverty, and unstable dictatorships posed unusual hardship on several young African nations; however, Africa currently stands at the cross-roads of economic development with many nations becoming some of fastest growing regions in the world.

Colonialism institutionalized the exploitation of Africa's mineral resources, resulting in today's oil industry dominating the economic market in several coastal regions. A surge in global oil prices; a growing African middle class; and reduction in civil wars, foreign aid, and inflation collectively promise a more positive outlook for the future.

Countries such as Botswana, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, and South Africa are economically the wealthiest on the continent, with regions such as East Africa showing signs of economic stability. Despite the economic upswing, much of sub-Saharan

Africa's future economic prosperity is held hostage by devastating diseases such as AIDS, particularly in areas of southern Africa, and the growing effects of climate change and man-made environmental degradation throughout the subcontinent.

12. Technology and Material

Societies use technology to transform their physical world, and culture heavily influences the development and use of technology. Africa lags far behind most of the world in manufacturing capacity and output. Even the more economically-developed nations such as South Africa are competitively weak when compared to non-African industrialized nations. During the 1970s and 1980s, Africa experienced some growth in raw exports although this increase did little to boost long-term manufacturing capacity.

Today, Africa is experiencing an actual decline in manufacturing capacity due primarily to a lull in the global economy, along with other indigenous issues such as environmental stress, poor physical and organizational infrastructure, and a shortage of skilled personnel. Likewise, African manufacturing capacity is no match against global powers such as China and significant Southeast Asian markets.

International aid from both governmental and non-governmental organizations has helped African nations establish preliminary economic footholds. For example, many of them have dedicated industrial developmental zones to attract foreign investment and increase export-related manufacturing capacity, although Africa is far removed from having a significant role in the global marketplace in the foreseeable future.

Now that we have introduced general concepts that characterize African society at large, we will now focus on specific features of Angolan society.

PART 2 – CULTURE SPECIFIC

1. HISTORY AND MYTH

History Overview
The early history of Angola was defined by the emergence of powerful Bantu-speaking states which were later consumed by conflicts resulting from nearly 500 years of Portuguese colonial occupation. Angola's modern history is defined by a near-constant state of civil war that only ended in 2002.

Early Angola
The earliest inhabitants of what is now Angola were the Khoisan people (see *Political and Social Relations*) who were present in the region by 6000 BC, likely arriving as early as 23000 BC. These early inhabitants were nomadic hunter-gatherers who herded animals on a limited scale. They never developed complex political structures and mostly lived in small, decentralized groups.

Bantu Migration: Perhaps as early as 1000 AD, small groups of Bantu-speakers (see *Language and Communication*) began arriving in what is now Angola from their original home near the border shared by present-day Cameroon and Nigeria. Although this migration took place in several waves over many centuries, the largest wave occurred in the 14th century.

Since the process of migrating effectively excludes agriculture, the Bantu-speakers subsisted as hunter-gatherers during their migrations. Once they formed permanent settlements, they began to raise livestock and cultivate crops. Scholars disagree about the fate of the Khoisan. Some say that the Bantu influx forced the Khoisan to migrate southward, while others maintain that the Bantu-speakers peacefully assimilated the Khoisan.

Bantu States

Between 1300 and 1600, Bantu-speakers formed a number of centralized political structures that eventually gave rise to the ethnic and linguistic groups of modern Angola (see *Political and Social Relations*). States situated near the coast tended to favor agriculture, merchant trade, and centralized government. Those located further inland were less centralized, relying on hunting and river fishing for sustenance.

Many but not all of the Bantu states had kings, who generally were thought to be divine and vested with considerable spiritual powers. Their worldly powers were more limited, however, and did not necessarily exceed those of rulers who ranked below them. Most Bantu states had armies for defense and territorial

expansion, as conflict between the states was fairly common, especially when trade disputes arose.

Kongo Kingdom: The most powerful Bantu state was the Kingdom of Kongo, which rose to prominence in the late 14th century. It emerged after members of the Bakongo ethnic group (see *Political and Social Relations*) migrated south of the Kongo River and founded their capital city of Mbanza Kongo in what would become northern

Angola. Kongo expanded rapidly because it assimilated people in regions it conquered rather than trying to subjugate them. By the mid-1400s, Kongo stretched across a vast swath of land between the environs of Mbanza Kongo and the banks of the Congo River in the present-day republics of the Congo (Pictured: The Coat of Arms of the Kingdom of Kongo).

Relative to other African states of the same period, Kongo was advanced. It had a centralized, bureaucratic government that collected taxes and regulated a common currency (sea shells). The inhabitants of Kongo worked both as merchants of copper and ivory and as craftspeople of metal and textiles. They also participated in the slave trade (see below). While they used some slave labor in their own territory, they primarily supplied Europeans with slaves and grew wealthy in the process.

Ndongo Kingdom: Located south of Kongo in the highlands of inland northern Angola, the Ndongo Kingdom was the next most powerful of the Bantu kingdoms, and for a time its power rivaled that of Kongo. Ndongo reached its apex in the 16th century, declining shortly thereafter due to Portuguese expansion (see below). Inhabited by iron and salt merchants, Ndongo was famous for having strong female rulers. The best known *ngola* ("ruler"—this term is the origin of "Angola") was Nzinga Mbande, who reigned in the mid-1600s (Photo: Nzinga's statue displayed in Angola's capital city, Luanda).

Mbundu Kingdoms: Ndongo was founded by the Mbundu ethnic group (see *Political and Social Relations*), which also established a number of other states to the east of Ndongo. The most prominent of those kingdoms were Matamba and Kasanje, which prospered as the Portuguese focused their attention on acquiring slaves (see below) from Ndongo.

Lunda Kingdom: To the east of the Mbundu Kingdoms was the Lunda Kingdom, founded in the late 1500s near the Kasai River in central Angola. From its capital in present-day southern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Lunda Kingdom expanded during the 17th century by incorporating neighboring groups into its empire rather than subjugating them directly. Lunda prospered from the slave trade that traversed its territory and tried unsuccessfully to expand upon that trade by attacking Matamba and Kasanje in the mid-18th century.

Ovimbundu Kingdoms: During the 16th and 17th centuries, members of the Ovimbundu ethnic group (see *Political and Social Relations*) migrated southward, settling on a coastal plateau near Angola's western city of Benguela. In the 18th century they formed 22 independent kingdoms of which the most powerful were Bié, Bailundu, and Ciyaka. The Ovimbundu eventually established a reputation as prosperous traders of resources from the interior.

Other Groups: During the mid-1800s, members of the Chokwe ethnic group (see *Political and Social Relations*) migrated from central Africa to present-day northeastern Angola and began working as traders. Unlike many other Bantu communities, they never formed a centralized state. Also during the 19th century, the Kwanhama ethnic group founded a kingdom in what is now southern Angola and northern Namibia. The Kwanhama traded eagerly with Europeans but found it relatively easy to maintain their independence due to their reputation as fierce warriors.

Arrival of Europeans

The first European to reach present-day Angola was Diogo Cão (pictured), a Portuguese explorer who arrived at the mouth of the Congo River in 1483. Soon after Cão's visit, the Portuguese conducted more expeditions to the region, developing peaceful relations with the *manikongo* (King of Kongo). The Angolans provided ivory, other goods, and slaves to the Europeans who in turn sent guns and Catholic missionaries (see *Religion and Spirituality*). The Portuguese further established ties with the Mbundu people, dispatching merchants and priests in 1520.

Slave Trade: Although the Portuguese originally had planned to export gold and copper from Angola, by the early 1500s they had shifted their focus to the more profitable slave trade. Most slaves captured in Angola were sent across the Atlantic Ocean to work on sugar plantations in Portuguese-controlled Brazil or on Spanish-controlled Caribbean islands. Between 1500 and 1850, an estimated 4 million Angolans were captured and sold to slave traders, although only about half that number survived the brutal and inhumane trip to the New World.

Although some of Angola's *pombeiros* (slave trading agents) were Portuguese, most were Africans or *mestiços* (people of Afro-Portuguese descent). They obtained slaves from African chiefs by trading goods such as guns, cloth, and wine. Luanda, the capital of modern Angola, was founded by the Portuguese in 1575 to serve as the main port of the slave trade.

Conflict and Portuguese Expansion

The growth of the slave trade prompted conflict in Angola as Europeans and Africans fought among themselves and with each other to control as much of the profits as possible. From roughly the 1540s until the 1660s, Kongo experienced repeated bouts of internal unrest and civil war while also fighting external wars—first against Ndongo in the late 1550s and then against the Portuguese in the 1660s. Similarly, Ndongo fought both Kongo and the Portuguese—their intermittent ally—from the late 1550s until the early 1670s.

Other European powers also participated in the upheaval. The Dutch invaded Luanda in 1641, remaining there until a Brazilian-based Portuguese force crossed the Atlantic and reclaimed the city in 1648. The same force then proceeded to lead conquests of both Kongo and Ndongo in order to preserve a steady supply of slaves for Brazil. Having conquered much of coastal Angola by 1670, the Portuguese halted their expansion efforts for the next century and a half. During that period, Kongo, Ndongo, and other Africans continued to resist Portuguese rule despite their defeat. In addition, Bantu states fought among themselves as newer states tried to expand (Pictured: Map of Luanda, 1665).

Abolition and Economic Transition

In the mid-1800s Portugal passed a series of laws that banned the slave trade, and later slavery itself, in all parts of the Portuguese empire. Still, both practices persisted for years after they were outlawed. While Portugal banned the slave trade in 1836, it did not decline until the British Royal Navy began enforcing Britain's anti-slavery laws in the 1840s.

Although slavery was outlawed officially in Angola in 1858, *libertos*, or freed slaves, were forced to complete a 20-year "apprenticeship." Thereafter, stringent anti-vagrancy laws forced many *libertos* to continue performing involuntary labor as plantation hands, miners, or railway construction workers. Forced labor continued in various forms until the mid-1900s.

Abolition prompted major changes to Angola's economy as the Portuguese experimented with different means of replacing lost revenues. This process began in the mid-19th century when the Portuguese increased customs duties at ports and levied a hut tax on the indigenous population that was payable in cash rather than in slaves. Since most Angolans still used a barter system, many could not pay the hut tax and as with *libertos* were forced to perform involuntary labor.

During the latter half of the 1800s, Angola expanded its exportation of resources such as ivory, rubber, and wax. Having renewed their expansion efforts in the 1830s, the Portuguese used newly claimed territories to expand cultivation of crops such as cocoa, coffee, cotton, palm oil, and sugar. In the early 20th century, diamond mining also began in Angola.

The project that affected Angola's economy most strongly during this period was probably the Benguela Railway (pictured). It was built between 1902 and 1928 in order to link mines in present-day DRC to the Angolan port of Lobito. For a time, this project accounted for most of the jobs in Angola.

Colonial Consolidation

The borders of modern Angola were not defined until 1891, a few years after the European powers consented to Portuguese control of Angola at the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884-1885. At about the same time, Portugal signed a treaty with a local African ruler in which they gained control over Cabinda, an exclave whose southern border is located about 25 mi from the northern border of mainland Angola.

From 1885-1930, the Portuguese consolidated their control in the region and suppressed the Bantu states that continued to resist Portuguese rule. The Mbundu abandoned their efforts in 1902, while the Ovimbundu followed suit in the following year. The Chokwe held on slightly longer, eventually surrendering in 1914. By 1920 the Portuguese had secured control over the entirety of modern Angola apart from the Southeast, and by 1930 they comfortably controlled the entire territory.

Portuguese Angola

After securing control of Angola, the Portuguese sought to administer the colony by creating social, political, and economic institutions based on those of Portugal. In the 1930s and 1940s, the activities of these institutions were directed toward establishing Angola as a self-sufficient market for Portuguese-made goods and assimilating native Angolans into mainstream Portuguese society.

In order to achieve these goals, the Portuguese administration created a system of racial classifications that in theory provided greater political rights to Africans who adopted the Portuguese culture and language. There were four tiers: white Portuguese, *mestiços* (people of Afro-Portuguese descent), *assimilados* (assimilated Africans), and *indígenas* (unassimilated Africans). Although *mestiços* and *assimilados* faced discrimination, they were far better off than *indígenas*, who constituted the vast majority of indigenous Angolans—99% in 1960. *Indígenas* had no civil or political rights and were subject to a brutal regime of racist regulations and forced labor.

White Migration: Partly due to Portugal's forced labor system, the Angolan economy grew rapidly after World War II, which was further stimulated when more than 250,000 white Portuguese moved to Angola. Despite Portuguese presence for nearly 500 years, this migration was the first major movement of white Portuguese to Angola—as late as 1900, there were fewer than 10,000 such settlers in the colony. The new settlers soon took control of Angola's administration and economy, prospering in the years prior to Angolan independence.

Nationalism and Independence

In the years following World War II there emerged a trend among European powers towards decolonization, both in Africa and elsewhere. Portugal defied this move, appearing to have no intention of relinquishing its colonial possessions. Instead, Portugal reclassified its colonies as Overseas Provinces, which in theory made them integral regions of Portugal proper.

Due to this Portuguese resolve, nationalist movements began to emerge in the late 1950s among Africans and *mestiços* in Angola, although they were forced to operate outside of Angola due to repressive Portuguese policies. In the 1960s, nationalist sentiment provoked popular uprisings that the Portuguese brutally suppressed. These uprisings convinced the nationalist leaders that armed struggle was necessary to win freedom. By the late 1960s, 3 main nationalist movements had taken shape.

MPLA: Founded in 1956 and led by poet and doctor Agostinho Neto, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA in Portuguese) was the earliest of Angola's nationalist movements. It drew support from the Mbundu ethnic group (see "Mbundu Kingdoms" above) and the *mestiço* elite in Luanda, aligning with the ideology of communist parties in Portugal and the Eastern Bloc.

FNLA: Established in 1962, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) drew support from the Bakongo ethnic group and foreign allies, including the US and Zaire (now the DRC). The FNLA's leader was Holden Roberto (Pictured: FNLA flag).

UNITA: Led by Jonas Malheiro Savimbi, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) was established in 1966, supported mainly by the Ovimbundu ethnic group (see "Ovimbundu Kingdoms" above). Its foreign allies were the People's Republic of China and South Africa, the latter of which was ruled by whites under a racist system known as *apartheid*.

War for Independence
The uprisings of the early 1960s gave way to a brutal guerilla war in which each of the nationalist movements fought against the Portuguese military. The Portuguese forcefully suppressed the guerillas, mostly outperforming them on the battlefield. Superior equipment and training partly explain the Portuguese success, but the lack of unity among the MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA also played a role. Divided by ethnic, regional, ideological differences, the nationalists failed to coordinate their movements, spending much of their time fighting each other.

Despite the guerillas' lack of coordination, the Portuguese were unable to defeat them fully. As the conflict continued into the mid-1970s, the Portuguese military grew weary, partly because it was trying to contain similar rebellions in other parts of Africa. Back in Portugal, many citizens began to think that the colonial wars may not be important enough to justify their financial and human costs. In the context of this widespread war-weariness, the Portuguese military staged a mostly bloodless coup in April 1974, toppling Portuguese Prime Minister Marcelo Caetano.

The new government acted quickly to end Portugal's colonial wars. The month after taking power, it agreed to a ceasefire with the Angolan nationalist movements. In January 1975, the Portuguese government, MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA signed the Alvor Agreement, which provided for Angolan independence under a coalition government. Although the Alvor Agreement did not resolve the differences among the nationalists, the Portuguese effectively washed their hands of the problem as Angola gained independence on November 11, 1975.

Civil War

The coalition government did not last long. Immediately after independence, civil war erupted between the MPLA on one side and UNITA and the FNLA on the other. The MPLA received troops from Cuba and logistical support from the Soviet Union. The FNLA and UNITA received military hardware from the US and personnel support from South Africa, which feared the prospect of a pro-Soviet regime in its neighborhood (Photo: A bridge destroyed during the Angolan Civil War).

Within a year, the MPLA had taken control of the administrative apparatus the Portuguese left behind in the capital, Luanda. Meanwhile, UNITA retreated to the countryside, launching a guerilla war. Although the FNLA weakened and later withdrew from the war in 1984, UNITA captured large areas of land in the interior. Agostinho Neto, the MPLA's leader, died in 1979 and was succeeded by José Eduardo dos Santos, the current President of Angola (see *Political and Social Relations*).

Sapped by the direct and indirect costs of war, the MPLA in the mid-1980s depended upon Cuba and the Soviet Union for the military advantage that allowed it to keep UNITA at bay. The two sides finally agreed to a ceasefire in 1991, holding multi-party elections in 1992. When the elections did not result in a UNITA win, Savimbi—still the leader of UNITA—dismissed them as a fraud, and the two sides returned to war.

The renewed war was much more violent and destructive than the original conflict, and by late 1994, the declining fortunes of UNITA forced Savimbi back to the bargaining table. He agreed to demobilize and disarm his fighters, while the MPLA agreed to integrate those fighters into the Angolan military. Known as the Lusaka Accords, the new agreement was almost as fleeting as the 1991 ceasefire. By 1998 the project of integrating the two forces had derailed, and fighting broke out once again.

This time UNITA was outmatched. Up until that time, much of its financing had come from illegally mined "conflict" (blood) diamonds. However, the introduction of international sanctions against diamond smuggling cut off much of UNITA's funding. The death blow for UNITA arrived on February 22, 2002, when Savimbi was killed in a battle with government forces. UNITA forces surrendered soon thereafter, ending the civil war.

Modern Angola

Since the conclusion of the civil war, Angola has made its first steps on the long road to social and economic recovery. It has been aided in the latter mission by large amounts of foreign aid and revenues from its petroleum exports, which are the 2nd-largest in Africa and 9th-largest in the world (see *Economics and Resources*).

Nevertheless, Angola still faces several challenges. Among the most pressing is the large number of land mines that remain buried and active in the countryside (see *Political and Social Relations*)—a legacy from both sides of the civil war. Another challenge consists of the ongoing separatists' activity in the oil-rich Cabinda exclave (see *Political and Social Relations*).

Myth Overview

Since there were no written forms of Angola's native languages until relatively recently (see *Language and Communication*), the country has a long tradition of oral myths and folklore. Angola has 6 types of folklore, and the one most similar to historical narrative is known as ***ma-lunda*** or ***mi-sendu***. This type of folklore records the factual history of a nation or tribe whose leaders or elders typically transmit orally. In most parts of Angola, knowledge of ***ma-lunda*** traditionally has been limited to tribal elites, who share only part of that knowledge with regular people.

A similar form of folklore consists of ***maka*** or anecdotes. ***Maka*** are similar to ***ma-lunda*** in that Angolans consider both genres factual. They differ since ***maka*** are meant to convey lessons about how to live rather than historical facts. In a US context, for example, the story of George Washington chopping down a cherry tree would be a ***maka***—it probably did not happen, but many people believe that it did and regard it as a lesson about honesty. A third category of narrative Angolan folklore consists of ***mi-soso***, or fictional stories. Unlike ***maka*** and ***ma-lunda***, ***mi-soso*** are meant to entertain. Many take the form of animal fables and include supernatural elements.

Angolans also have more concise forms of folklore. ***Ji-sabu***, or proverbs, for example, are short, abstract, indirect sayings that convey moral principles. ***Ji-sabu*** typically complement ***maka*** by capturing the latter's essences, while ***maka*** can illustrate the practical meanings of ***ji-sabu***. Another concise form of Angolan folklore is ***ji-nongonongo***, or riddles, which usually involve wordplay and are meant mainly for amusement.

The last form of Angolan folklore is ***mi-mumbu***, or poetry and songs. The two forms are effectively the same in Angola, as all poems are sung, while all vocal music involves words (see *Aesthetics and Recreation*). Although most ***mi-mumbu*** do not rhyme, they usually incorporate alliteration and parallelism. Many ***mi-mumbu*** are epic poems.

Role of Animals in Folklore

In much of Africa's folklore, the animal world is arranged in much the same way as the human world, with a government consisting of a king, various officers, and a parliament. Each species is associated with a certain set of characteristics and has a societal role relative to those characteristics.

In Angolan folklore, for example, the elephant is equally strong and wise and therefore serves as king, while the lion, who is strong but not noble, serves as the elephant's top advisor. The text box below contains an Angolan folktale that explains how dogs—which are typically portrayed as low and servile—came to be pets and why jackals—which are usually portrayed as clever—began howling.

Dog and Jackal

In the past, Dog and Jackal used to live together in the countryside. One day, Jackal had the idea to set fire to the prairie grass in order to catch locusts for a meal. He told Dog to go to a human village and fetch some fire for his plan.

Dog went to the village and entered a home, where a mother was feeding porridge to her child. Deciding not to take the fire, Dog sat down and watched the mother finish feeding her child. When she was done, she scraped the bottom of the porridge pot and gave the excess to Dog. Delighted, Dog began wondering why he fought each day to survive in the countryside when food was easily available in the village. Consequently, he decided to remain in the village.

Meanwhile, Jackal was surprised that his friend had failed to return. Occasionally, he still howls about the episode. Although humans assume he is indulging some primal canine urge, he is actually speaking: "I am surprised! Dog, whom I sent to fetch fire, was seduced by porridge and stayed for good!"

Official Name
Republic of Angola
República de Angola
Repubilika ya Ngola

Political Borders
Republic of the Congo:
125 mi
Democratic Republic of
the Congo: 1,560 mi
Zambia: 550 mi
Namibia: 690 mi
Coastline: 994 mi

Capital
Luanda

Demographics
Angola's population of 18.6 million is growing at a rate of 2.8% per year—13th highest in Africa and 17th in the world. This relatively high rate is aided by Angola's fertility ratio of 5.5 children-per-woman—the world's 10th highest. Despite this fast growth, Angola is one of the most sparsely populated countries in Africa—particularly in the desert East and Southeast—with just 39 people per sq mi. Consequently, most Angolans live along the northern coastline. Slightly less than 60% of Angolans live in a city, and about 43% live in Luanda alone.

Flag
The Angolan flag consists of two equal-width horizontal bands—red on the top and black on the bottom—with a yellow emblem in the center. The emblem, which is designed to emulate the hammer and sickle emblem often associated with communism, consists of a partial cogwheel enclosing a five-pointed star and crossed by a machete. Red symbolizes liberty, black signifies Africa, and the emblem stands for workers and peasants.

Geography

Angola is located at the southern end of Africa's Atlantic Coast and has a total area of 481,354 sq mi, which is roughly twice the size of Texas. It is bordered to the north by the Republic of the Congo (ROC), to the northeast by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to the east by Zambia, and to the south by Namibia. Angola's territory includes an exclave called Cabinda, which is located about 25 mi north of the mainland's northern border and has a total area of slightly more than 3,000 sq mi.

While Angola has no large lakes, it has many rivers, the largest of which is the Cubango. Along with the Cuito and Cuando, the Cubango flows southwestward into Botswana, terminating in the Okavango Delta. The Kwango and Chicapa, by contrast, flow northward into the Congo River. Other major rivers include the Kasai, Cuanza, and Cunene.

Angola has 3 topographical zones. The first consists of coastal lowlands that vary in width from about 100 mi near Luanda to about 30 mi near Benguela. The second consists of mountains and hills that lie immediately east of the coastal lowlands and vary similarly in width. The third consists of the Bié Plateau, or

planalto (high plateau), which covers much of central Angola and has an average elevation of about 6,000 ft. To the west sits Angola's highest point, Mount Moco (pictured) at 8,592 ft.
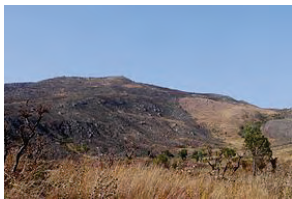
Climate

Angola has a tropical climate that varies with elevation, latitude, time of year, and proximity to the coast. The country has both a wet season, which extends from September through April, and a dry season, from May through August. The North is generally warmer than the South. For example, the city of Soyo in the Northwest has an average temperature of 80° F, while the city of Huambo in western central Angola has an average temperature of 67° F. Similarly, the interior tends to be rainier than the coast. For example, the Bié Plateau receives about 57 inches of annual rainfall, while the wettest regions of the coast receive no more than 40 inches.

Natural Hazards and Environmental Issues
Angola's primary natural hazard is flooding, which sometimes occurs after heavy rainfall on the Bié Plateau. Environmental issues include soil erosion, a result of population pressures and overgrazing; water pollution, a byproduct of soil erosion; and deforestation, a consequence of global demand for Angola's tropical timber (see *Economics and Resources*) and the use by locals of wood fuel for energy (see *Technology and Material*).

Government
Following its independence from Portugal in 1975, Angola adopted a constitution that established a single-party state. Due to civil war (see *History and Myth*), the "interim" 1975 constitution was not replaced until 1992, when the opposing forces agreed to alter the provisional constitution in order to implement a multiparty system. The 1992 constitution was

replaced in 2010 with one that expanded presidential powers, eliminated the post of Prime Minister, and altered the nature of the voting system so that electors choose parties rather than candidates.

Executive Branch
As a consequence of the 2010 legislation, the party leader holding a majority in the National Assembly (see below) serves as the President of Angola, currently José Eduardo dos Santos (pictured). The President acts as head-of-state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, serving a maximum of two 5-year terms. This term limit was imposed by the 2010 constitution to take effect starting with the 2012 elections. In addition to choosing a Vice President to assist with executive duties, the President appoints judges, Ministers of State, and various other offices.

Legislative Branch
Angola's legislative branch consists of a single-chamber National Assembly, which has 220 members who serve 5-year terms. Of those 220 members, 130 are elected to represent the nation as a whole, while 90 are elected at the provincial level (5 for each of Angola's 18 provinces).

Judicial Branch

The Angolan legal system is based on Portuguese civil law and unwritten customary laws of the indigenous population. The Angolan constitution recognizes customary law and traditional authorities, both of which continue to exercise substantial influence in Angola. Their importance is at least partly a result of the civil war, which limited the reach of the formal system. Even today, many jurisdictions lack lower courts.

Political Climate

Despite its transition to a multi-party system in 1992, the country in many ways resembles a single-party state which thus far has been dominated by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) (Pictured: Flag of the MPLA). Tracing its roots to a nationalist movement of the same name (see *History and Myth*), the MPLA holds the Presidency and 175 of 220 seats (80%) in the National Assembly. Only 4 of 77 other parties are represented in the legislature.

Although there is evidence that Angola's government violates human rights and suppresses political opposition, the primary concern with MPLA dominance is that the party seems to direct much of Angola's oil revenue (see *Economics and Resources*) into private hands. According to a 2004 report by Human Rights Watch, an international non-governmental organization, $4.2 billion in public funds disappeared between 1997 and 2002.

Corruption on such a scale frustrates many Angolans, of whom the majority live in poverty despite a near doubling in Angola's inflation-adjusted GDP-per-person since the conclusion of the civil war. Although the position of the MPLA seems secure in the short term, it could weaken quickly if proactive measures to improve the welfare of the average Angolan are not implemented. Indeed, some Angolans already have organized protests in hopes of stimulating popular demands for changes in the Angolan government.

Defense

The Angolan Armed Forces (known by the Portuguese acronym FAA) consists of 3 services—Army, Navy, and Air Force—with a joint strength of about 107,000 personnel. Tracing its roots to the military wing of the MPLA, the FAA is widely seen as an effective force that respects the authority of civilian leaders. Compared to other African militaries, the FAA is enormous—only 6 countries in Africa have larger forces. The size of the FAA reflects not just the legacy of Angola's civil war but also the perceived need to counterbalance South African power and maintain the ability to respond to regional instability. Angola's defense spending is high by African standards. The country spent the equivalent of 3.6% of GDP on the military in 2011—almost 2.5 times the average for sub-Saharan Africa.

Army: With around 100,000 active-duty personnel, the Army is by far the largest branch of the FAA. While its primary mission is to maintain Angola's territorial integrity, the Army also has a range of secondary missions, such as rehabilitating roadways (see *Technology and Material*), de-mining the countryside (see "Security Issues" below), and reconstructing bridges. Since the early 2000s, the Army has absorbed about 5,500 former rebel fighters into its ranks, both from UNITA (see *History and Myth*) and Cabindan separatist groups (see "Security Issues" below).

Air Force: The mission of Angola's 6,000-strong Air Force is to protect the country's airspace and territorial integrity. The Air Force's inventory is of predominantly Soviet origin and consists of about 90 fighter jets, 80 transport and training aircraft, 70 attack or mixed-role helicopters, and 35 transport helicopters.

Navy: The Navy has only 1,000 personnel, and few, if any, of its estimated 14 vessels are operational. The Navy's mission is to defend Angola's territorial waters and maritime borders.

Cooperation: In recent years the FAA has expanded ties with the Chinese military, including a 2007 agreement that provides for exchanges of equipment and technical expertise. Both the US and Brazil have sought to develop similar ties with the FAA.

Angolan National Air Force Rank Insignia

Private
1st Class

Corporal

Sergeant

Staff
Sergeant

1st
Sergeant

Master
Sergeant

Warrant
Officer

2nd
Lieutenant

1st
Lieutenant

Captain

Major

Lieutenant
Colonel

Colonel

Major
General

Lieutenant
General

General

Armed Forces
Chief of Staff

Security Issues

Mines: During the civil war both sides of the conflict laid thousands of land mines, making Angola the likely owner of more active land mines than any other African country. More than 100,000 already have been cleared, although it is unknown how many land mines remain or where they are located. While Luanda and other large cities are considered safe, the countryside remains potentially dangerous, especially away from main roads. The most heavily affected provinces are Bié, Kwanza Sul, Lunda Norte, Malanje, and Moxico. Since 1975 more than 80,000 Angolans have been fatal victims of land mines, including the death or injury of 80 people in 2010.

Cabindan Separatism: Since the mid-1970s, separatists in the Cabinda exclave of Angola have waged a low-level insurgency against the national government. Although the uprising has calmed since the government signed a peace deal with some separatists in 2006, the Front for the Liberation of the Exclave of Cabinda (FLEC) has executed attacks against expatriates residing in Angola in recent years. The latest event occurred in January 2010, when FLEC operatives attacked a bus carrying Togo's soccer team to the African Cup of Nations tournament. Three players were killed and several injured. FLEC has threated to conduct more attacks.

Reintegration: Although Angola's military and police force have incorporated thousands of UNITA fighters into their ranks since the end of the civil war, that number represents only a small fraction of UNITA's former strength of 100,000 (see *History and Myth*). Although many fighters were demobilized successfully, about 11,000 were still in demobilization camps in 2010. Based on past governmental pledges, those former rebels expect to be given the means to subsist such as land, shelter, money, and tools. The government, however, has been unable or unwilling to honor its pledges, and the camps now present a risk of crime, lawlessness, and instability.

Foreign Relations

Although the FAA was deployed as recently as 2002 to 3 of Angola's 4 neighbors, Angola's relations with its border nations are largely positive. The least complicated of Angola's regional relationships is probably that with Namibia, a close ally that Angola supported during its struggle for independence from South African *apartheid* (see *History and Myth*). Angola also has good relations with the ROC, which has ethnic ties with Angola and in the past shared its former Marxist ideology. Although relations with Zambia were strained in the past due to Zambia's alleged support to UNITA, ties have warmed due partly to cross-border trade (Photo: Assunção dos Anjos, Angolan Minister of External Relations from 2008-2010).


While Angola and the DRC share historical, economic, and ethnic ties, relations between the countries are complicated by several issues. Foremost is Angola's perceived poor treatment of Congolese workers and disputes about control over offshore oil fields. The neighbors also have fought concurrent civil wars in recent years, having intervened in each other's conflicts.

Multilateral Organizations: Angola participates in a number of multilateral organizations. Its most important regional affiliation is with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), a 15-country organization that pursues stability in southern Africa. Angola's most important international affiliation is with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), an organization that coordinates oil production levels between its 12 member countries and thereby steers world oil prices.

Angola-US Relations: Although the US once supported the rebel nationalist movements UNITA and FNLA (see *History and Myth*), in 1993 the US recognized the MPLA government and established diplomatic relations with Angola. The US now sees Angola as an important partner in ensuring stability in central and southern Africa. The US also purchases a large share of Angola's oil exports. In recent years, the US has helped Angola de-mine its countryside and resettle war-scattered refugees.

Ethnic Groups

Angola is home to about 100 ethnic groups, nearly all of which speak Bantu languages (see *Language and Communication*). The largest groups—the Ovimbundu, Mbundu, and Bakongo—account for nearly 2/3 of the population. Most other Angolans belong to smaller Bantu-speaking groups, although there also are communities of Portuguese, ***mestiços*** (mixed-race Afro-Portuguese), and Khoisan hunter-gatherers.

Ovimbundu 40% · Mbundu 25% · Bakongo 15% · Other Groups 20%
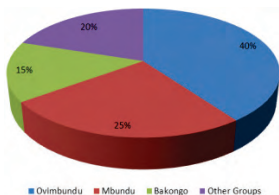
Ovimbundu

The Ovimbundu are the largest ethnic group in Angola, comprising slightly less than 40% of the population. They live primarily in western central Angola and historically speak the Umbundu language, although many also speak Portuguese. During the civil war, UNITA drew the core of its support from the Ovimbundu.

Mbundu

The Mbundu are the next largest ethnic group, accounting for about 25% of the population. They live primarily in northern and northwestern Angola and speak the Kimbundu language. The Ndongo Kingdom, from which Angola derives its name, was established by the Mbundu (see *History and Myth*). The MPLA drew much of its support from the Mbundu during the civil war.

Bakongo

Accounting for roughly 15% of the population, the Bakongo live in northern Angola, including the Cabinda exclave. They also constitute a majority in the DRC and a plurality in the ROC. As their name suggests, the Bakongo established the Kingdom of Kongo (see *History and Myth*), and were associated with the FNLA during the civil war.

Khoisan

The Khoisan are nomadic hunter-gatherers who live mainly in southern Angola, Namibia, Botswana, and South Africa. They speak a non-Bantu language and differ in physical appearance from Bantu-speakers, having a small stature and light, copper-colored skin. They constitute only a small part of the Angolan population but are believed to be indigenous to the region.

Social Relations

Angolan culture is a blend of enduring African traditions and the more recent influences of Christianity and Western society. Each of these influences has affected most Angolans to some degree, although to varying degrees depending on the different Angolan lifestyles, particularly rural versus urban as detailed below. Regardless of their differences, nearly all Angolans share certain broader cultural values. For example, Angolans tend to reject individualism in favor of communalism and social interaction. Consequently, a sense of unity is strong in Angola, even in relatively Westernized major cities. Despite these commonalities, cultural norms vary according to certain characteristics, which often correspond with social rank.

The most evident characteristic is urbanization. Village dwellers tend to observe traditional African values closely and in many cases follow traditional religions (see *Religion and Spirituality*). In addition, they tend to have lower levels of formal education because their lifestyles rely upon knowledge perpetuated by elders rather than taught through schools and books (see *Learning and Knowledge*). The dominant means of earning a livelihood in rural areas is agricultural labor.

By contrast, most city dwellers are Westernized and follow the Christian faith, a legacy of Portuguese colonizers and Christian missionaries. Many urban dwellers speak Portuguese and are educated in Western-style schools. Although there are plenty of laborers in cities, some urban dwellers work in professional disciplines such as journalism, law, medicine, and education.

Conceptions of social status also vary between urban and rural Angola. In rural areas, a traditional respect for age still prevails. Elders are regarded as wise and deeply knowledgeable about the values and customs of their culture. In many cases, elders are entrusted with substantial authority, especially in religious matters. In urban areas, by contrast, social status is tied more closely to wealth and educational attainment than to age.

Overview

Most Angolans are Christian. The Roman Catholic Church estimates that 55% of the population is Catholic, while Angola's National Institute for Religious Affairs (INAR) estimates that another 25% of Angolans belong to Independent African denominations and about 10% follow mainstream Protestant traditions. A small portion of Angola's population practices only traditional religion, while there is a small Muslim community of about 80,000 people, primarily immigrants from West Africa and Lebanon. Most Angolans, regardless of their affiliation, are deeply religious people who value spiritual events, rituals, and ceremonies (Photo: Our Lady of Muxima Church on the Kwanza River).

Although Angola is a secular state whose constitution and other laws protect religious freedom, its government restricts the activities of religious organizations (see "Religion and the Law" below), denying some of its citizens freedom of worship. Although religion itself has never been a source of conflict in Angola, it historically has and continues to be a political instrument for both the government and its opposition.

Traditional Beliefs

Before the arrival of Christian missionaries and continuing into modern times, many Angolans have upheld an indigenous belief system anchored in spiritual influences—natural, ancestral, and divine. As nature worshipers or animists, they have believed that the spirit of life or consciousness resides in all objects, both animate and inanimate, and that all natural objects—for example, trees and animals—are sacred. This conviction has established a close connection between Angolan animists and their environment. Many Angolans also have believed that the spirits of their ancestors participates in daily life by guiding or even obstructing human behavior.

With regard to the divine, many Angolans also have recognized a supreme being—a creator god who is good, merciful, and unknowable. Among the Chokwe ethnic group, the supreme being (*Kalunga* or *Nzambi*) has been worshipped through rituals directed at *mahamba* or ancestral spirits represented in small, carved statues or elaborate masks worn by elders on ceremonial occasions.

Angolans traditionally have used a variety of means to avoid misfortunes brought about by unhappy or malicious spirits. For example, the Bakongo carve elaborate wooden figures that they believe would absorb—and thereby render harmless to humans—the curses from spirits (Photo: Yombe wooden religious figure).

Christianity

Introduction of Christianity
Roman Catholicism arrived in Angola at the end of the 1400s, when Portuguese explorers entered the Kingdom of Kongo (see *History and Myth*). As one of the earliest Angolan converts to Christianity, the Kongo king took the name Alfonso I and established a trading partnership with the Portuguese.

Over the next 50 years, several Bakongo traveled to Portugal to study the language, culture, and religion, while Portuguese missionaries traveled throughout the Kingdom of Kongo. Although the missionaries had left Kongo by 1615, their presence in other areas, including the Ndongo and Mbundu kingdoms (see *History and Myth*), ensured that Catholicism maintained a foothold in Angola as Portugal pursued its goal of "commerce, civilization, and Christianity" in Africa.

Religion during the Colonial Period
Over the next few hundred years, Angola's various kingdoms alternately fought each other, while forming alliances to resist the Portuguese (see *History and Myth*). While the Bantu states continued to resist Portuguese rule into the 20th century, Catholic missionaries maintained a presence in the country. Subsequently, religion would become an instrument of Portuguese colonialism over the next several centuries.

English Baptist Church missionaries were the first in a wave of Protestant missionaries who began to arrive in the late 19th century. For the most part, Protestants tended to concentrate their efforts in areas associated with resident ethnic groups. For example, Baptists were most active in the northern regions inhabited by the Bakongo; Methodists were concentrated near Luanda, home of the Mbundu people; while Congregationalists worked in the central plateau, among the Ovimbundu. These ties between Protestant denominations, geographic regions, and ethnic identities became significant during the civil war and persist to the present day.

Many missionaries—both Catholic and Protestant—regarded indigenous African cultures as degraded and uncivilized, believing it was their Christian duty to share Western civilization with Angolans. Dismissive of traditional practices and beliefs, most missionaries encouraged their converts to adopt Western-style gender roles, family structures, housing, clothing, patterns of work, and agricultural practices.

Although many missionaries opposed slavery, others supported it. As late as 1870, the Bishop of Luanda could sit on a marble chair at the dock and baptize slaves in chains as they were loaded onto ships bound for the Americas (see *History and Myth*). The Catholic Church had expanded into most of Angola by 1930, when the Portuguese colonial administration declared Catholic missions "instrument[s] of civilization and national influence" (Photo: Missionaries and colonial administrators in the 1930s).

Religion and Independence
During the war for Independence in the 1960s and early 1970s (see *History and Myth*), many Angolans held a negative view of the Catholic Church, which they primarily associated with the oppressive colonial regime. Having suffered sometimes severe repression under Portuguese colonial administrators, large numbers of Angolan Protestants participated in revolts against the Portuguese.

Of note, the leaders of the 3 main nationalist movements (see *History and Myth*) were educated by Protestant missionaries: Agostinho Neto, the founder of the MPLA, was the son of a Mbundu Methodist pastor; Jonas Savimbi, the founder of UNITA, attended a Congregationalist school; and Holden Roberto, the founder of the FNLA, was the son of a Bakongo Baptist mission worker.

Religion during the Civil War

Although it never banned Christian organizations outright, the ruling MPLA (see *History and Myth*) revealed its hostility toward religion shortly after Independence. It forced Christian institutions to relinquish their schools, clinics, and property and denied them a political voice. When the MPLA abandoned its communist philosophy in 1990, it allowed religious institutions to resume their social, educational, and medical activities.

During the civil war, the nationalist movements were separated not only by ethnic divisions (see *History and Myth*) but also by religious divisions: each movement was associated closely with the Protestant denomination of its founder. Consequently, the fates of the Protestant denominations were linked closely to those of their affiliated movements. For example, as the FNLA faded from the struggle and its supporters fled Angola, the Baptist Church declined. By contrast, Congregationalist churches thrived in UNITA-controlled areas, while the Methodist Church was regarded as the official state church having some ties with the MPLA.

Meanwhile, as it re-engaged in community work, the Catholic Church regained influence. It assumed a greater political role, urging UNITA and the MPLA to seek a negotiated peace. Similarly, it used pastoral letters to press for transparency, democracy, and fair elections. Although the MPLA-led government accused the Church of siding with the enemy, the Catholic Church was the most outspoken religious organization advocating an end to civil war violence (Photo: Our Lady of Muxima Church, a Catholic Church that is considered Angola's most important site of pilgrimage).

Religion Today

Today, most Angolans belong to the Catholic Church, mainstream Protestant churches, or Independent African churches. Furthermore, about 5% of Angolans now belong to Brazilian-based evangelical churches such as the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. All of Angola's churches have experienced tremendous growth since the 1990s. Whether during the week or on Sunday, church services typically are well-attended and conducted in both Portuguese and indigenous languages (see *Language and Communication*).

Many Christian churches continue to provide educational, medical, and social services that the government cannot fund. These services include managing schools—from pre-primary to post-secondary levels (see *Learning and Knowledge*)—and performing a wide range of social support activities, including medical care and agricultural development projects. Due to the success of Angolan churches in meeting the basic needs of the population, Angolans typically express more trust in churches than in the government or international aid agencies.

Although Angola currently has no religiously affiliated political parties, both the Catholic and Methodist churches are known for political activism. Both churches advocate broad political reforms, such as a more equitable distribution of oil revenues and the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission to help Angolans cope with the legacy of the civil war. In addition, both organizations condemn corruption and the authoritarian tendencies of President dos Santos.

In addition to efforts of individual churches, Christian umbrella organizations—such as the Council of Christian Churches of Angola, the Angolan Evangelical Alliance, the Inter-Ecclesial Committee for Peace in Angola, and the Episcopal Conference of Angola and São Tomé—have undertaken peace-building and reconciliation initiatives (Photo: Members of an Angolan women's reconciliation group).

Roman Catholicism

Most Angolan Catholics live along the densely populated western coast. As Catholicism is not tied to any single ethnic tradition in Angola, Catholics are found in all of the country's ethnic groups (see *Political and Social Relations*). Despite Catholicism's prevalence in Angola, some Angolans still consider Catholicism the religion of the colonial oppressors (Photo: A Catholic Church in Tombua).

Mainstream Protestant Denominations

The fastest growing mainstream Protestant and evangelical denominations include the Evangelical Reformed churches, the Baptist Mission, the Assemblies of God, the Seventh-Day Adventists, the Presbyterian Church, the Church of Christ, and the Congregationalist Church. Newer Protestant churches— such as the Independent Reformed Church of Angola and the Biblical Christian Church in Angola—are offshoots of these mainstream denominations.

Independent African Churches

Independent African churches take several different forms, although most trace their founding to charismatic leaders who broke away from mainstream Protestant mission churches. For example, both the Kimbanguist and Tocoist churches emerged from the teachings of Bakongo prophets who opposed the Portuguese colonial regime, believing that the true intention of God was to be found in a new African Christian theology rather than in the "civilizing mission" of the Portuguese.

Kimbanguist Church: While imprisoned by colonial authorities in what was then the Belgian Congo in 1921, Simon Kimbangu declared that Jesus Christ had sent him to start a new church based on both Catholicism and traditional beliefs. Introduced to Angola in the 1960s, the "Kimbanguist" movement faced repression under the colonial regime. After Independence, it was suspect for aligning with the Bakongo ethnic group. Also called the International Church of Jesus Christ on the Earth, the movement has around 1 million members in Angola.

Tocoist Church: Often referred to informally by the name of its founder, Simão Toco, the Tocoist Church is known formally as Our Lord Jesus Christ Church in the World. Initially based on the Kimbanguist tradition, the church later emphasized Toco's prophetic teachings. Although the church faced repression by colonial authorities, its members were also persecuted by the MPLA, which even banned the church for a few years in the 1980s. Declared a legal religion in 1988, the Tocoist Church today is the second largest Christian movement in Angola, having well over 1 million members.

Charismatic Holy Ghost Churches: Also called Pentecostal churches, charismatic churches are distinguished by their informal services, during which worshippers pray loudly, speak in tongues, and sing, clap, and dance ecstatically. Members of these churches interpret the Bible literally and believe in faith healing, prophecies, and miracles through prayer. They discourage gambling, consuming alcohol, and smoking cigarettes. Unlike Kimbanguists and Tocoists, Pentecostals do not incorporate traditional beliefs and practices into their services, as they consider them incompatible with Christianity.

Traditional Beliefs
A traditional worldview still infuses daily life for many Angolans—even those who identify as Christian. They believe that spirits or a form of magical power resides in many objects, and that both ancestral and natural spirits influence their daily lives.

When misfortune or illness befalls Angolans, they sometimes consult a *kimbanda* (diviner). In return for a fee, *kimbandas* identify the ancestor causing the misfortune and suggest cures. In some cases, *kimbandas* use such special ritual objects as clay figurines, pieces of bone or metal, or teeth or horns of animals to help them communicate with the spirits. In other cases, *kimbandas* use their knowledge of herbal medicine to suggest treatments (see *Sustenance and Health*).

Some Angolans blame bad luck and sickness, and more often death and accidents, not just on an unhappy ancestor spirit but on the purposeful and malevolent work of witches or sorcerers (*feiticeiros* or *macumbeiros*). In some such cases, Angolans take measures to protect themselves or consult a religious specialist to identify the witch and perform an exorcism.

Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations

Angola's National Institute of Religious Affairs (INAR) reports that children are occasionally accused of performing sorcery or witchcraft and are subjected to exorcism rituals that involve physical abuse and sometimes result in death. During his visit to Angola in 2009, Pope Benedict XVI denounced accusations of sorcery and witchcraft, imploring those who make them to convert to Catholicism. According to INAR, these cases have diminished significantly in recent years due to government directives and campaigns from governmental agencies, church groups, and civil society organizations.

Religion and the Law

Angola's government requires religious groups to petition the Ministries of Justice and Culture for legal status, permitting them to operate openly and construct churches and schools. A religious group must have more than 100,000 members and a presence in 12 of Angola's 18 provinces to obtain legal status. Without legal status, religious groups face closure or property destruction. As of 2010 there were 85 official religious groups and more than 2,000 unofficial groups.

Although unofficial Christian groups have faced consequences for lacking legal status, Muslim organizations have been most affected. The government has not granted legal status to any Islamic organizations, selectively interfering with the construction of Muslim mosques, schools, and community centers. In addition, government officials have described Islam publicly as alien to Angolan culture.

4. FAMILY AND KINSHIP

Overview
Although 26 years of civil war (see *History and Myth*) severely disrupted traditional patterns of family and kinship in Angola, the family has remained a highly valued institution in its society. In recent years, urbanization and modernization have changed many aspects of family life.

Family Structure
In rural areas where tradition still prevails, the basic social unit is the extended family—two parents, their children, and other relatives linked by ancestry or marriage. In most cases, members of the same extended family share meals, live near each other, and are all expected to help support the household. The oldest male, known as *a mais velho* ("the eldest") in Portuguese, is head of the family and is respected for his wisdom and experience.

The nature of the family has changed in the more modernized Angolan cities. During the civil war, many Angolans migrated to cities in order to find employment and escape violence in the countryside. Consequently, large living spaces have become harder to find in cities where the average urban household size has shrunk accordingly. In most cases, only nuclear families—which consist of 2 parents and their children—comprise a household, although some family units are larger. Due to civil war casualties, many Angolan households are headed by a single—usually female—parent.

Lineage: Most ethnic groups in Angola are patrilineal, meaning that lineage is traced through male ancestors. There are some of Angola's ethnic groups that are matrilineal, whereby lineage is determined through the female line. The Ovimbundu ethnic group uses a double-descent system in which political authority is determined by patrilineage, while economic issues such as inheritance are determined through matrilineage.

Polygyny: A practice in which a man is married to multiple women at the same time, polygyny is popular particularly in rural areas, although it is not recognized in the Angolan legal system. Due to the death of many young men during the Angolan civil war (see *History and Myth*), polygyny in recent years has offered many women the opportunity to get married.

Polygyny is considered a sign of wealth, as it indicates that the man can support multiple households even though they do not always fulfill that obligation. In villages, a polygynous family usually occupies a single home, while secondary wives and children in urban areas typically live in separate residences.

Children: Angolans view childbearing as the primary purpose of marriage and an essential duty in life. Large families with 4-6 children are common, as women in Angola traditionally have been expected to bear as many children as possible. This norm is due both to high levels of infant mortality and to children's value as laborers in an agricultural society. In both urban and rural areas, Angolans prefer male children to female.

During Angola's civil war, many children were forced to serve as combatants on either side, filling positions as messengers, cooks, prostitutes, and soldiers. Since the end of the civil war, children who were orphaned during the conflict in many cases have existed as "street children" who must beg or do odd jobs to survive. Not all street children are orphans, as some were forced to leave their homes "voluntarily" due to economic circumstances burdening their parents.

Residence

In Angolan villages, traditional homes are 1-room structures made from adobe (dried mud bricks) and roofed with metal or thatched branches (Photo: A rural home in northwestern Angola). Typically, there is an outdoor cooking area located nearby. In some villages, these 1-room structures are grouped in circles in order to create a central courtyard that protects animals and provides a social gathering place.

In Angolan cities, most construction halted when civil war fighting began. Consequently, housing tends to be scarce, dilapidated, and expensive. Many Angolans live on the outskirts of cities in informal suburbs called *musséques*.

Homes in *musséques* are constructed with easily available materials, including tin, cinderblocks, and plastic sheets. As utilities are rarely available, many *musséques* do not have adequate electricity or sanitation. In the Luanda area, around 3 million people live in *musséques*. In recent years, the government has cleared many *musséques* in order to make room for new urban development.

Rites-of-Passage Ceremonies

Angolans observe the following rites-of-passage ceremonies to mark the various stages of life.

Birth and Infancy: Births in Angola traditionally are celebrated with a special meal. In addition, the mother and child receive gifts, either on the day the mother gives birth or the day she returns home from the hospital.

Initiation Rituals: Now limited mainly to rural Angola, initiation rituals traditionally have signified the transition from childhood to adulthood. Although male initiation rituals have declined in modern Angola, they historically involved both circumcision and intensive instruction in the matters of adulthood. For example, in the Chokwe initiation ritual (known as *mukanda*), boys are sent for several months to secretive camps, where they receive instruction in social values, dance, history, skilled labor, and other topics regarded as preparing them for manhood.

Only a few ethnic groups traditionally had initiation rituals for girls, although the Ovimbundu had puberty rites for girls that involved receiving instruction on sexual matters from older women. For both genders, the timing of initiation rituals varied. Some rituals occurred at the first sign of puberty, while others were c just before weddings. Civil war violence led to the suspension of many initiation rituals.

Marriage

Spouse Selection: Angolan marriages traditionally have been arranged by the parents or relatives of the couple. The function of marriage was not so much to sanctify a romantic attachment as to solidify ties between families. Although the traditional practice has faded, most Angolan parents still expect their children to seek approval before marriage. Many urban Angolans date in the same manner as Western couples.

Brideprice: Once a couple decides to wed, their families hold an *alambemento*, or a ceremony to negotiate a brideprice. The brideprice is a gift offered by the groom's family to the bride's in order to compensate for the loss of her presence and labor. Negotiations can be lengthy, although the brideprice usually is paid before the wedding occurs.

Weddings: Especially in urban areas, Angolan weddings tend to be performed by priests in Christian churches. As in Western countries, the bride traditionally wears a white dress, while the groom wears a suit and tie. The wedding usually is followed by a party with dancing and food. Afterwards, the wedding party drives through town while motorists honk horns in celebration.

Some Angolans may opt instead for civil marriage at a courthouse. Since marriage registration can be a long and complex process, many Angolan couples—about 80%—do not formally wed. Instead, they simply stay together for 3 years, after which they are married "*de facto*" in the eyes of the law.

Death

Angolans believe that the deceased must be buried within 1 week of death in order to allow the spirit to rest. Funerals usually involve a Christian mass, which the friends and family members of the deceased are expected to attend. Some Angolans believe that celebrations will make the deceased happy. Accordingly, the deceased's friends and family sometimes organize festive occasions. Partly because the civil war disrupted customary mourning practices, many people who died during that period remain missing or unburied.

Overview
Despite their substantial influence in daily life, Angolan women historically have suffered discrimination. Nevertheless, women increasingly are being recognized for the greater economic and social burdens that they have borne since the end of the civil war, during which many of Angola's men perished.

Gender Roles and Work
Men and women traditionally performed different tasks in the home. Men hunted, traded, and tended cattle, while women were responsible for cooking, cleaning, and crop cultivation. Women also were responsible for looking after children and other family members, while men acted as the primary disciplinarians.

Today, women in rural areas still perform most domestic work and care for family members. They also are responsible for planting and harvesting crops and, in some cases, earning additional income by working outside the home in education, administration, or similar fields. Some women also trade goods in *kandangas*, or informal markets. By contrast, rural men are responsible for preparing fields for cultivation. In urban areas, gender roles have blurred, although men still tend to dominate business, politics, and the military.

Gender and the Law
While the Angolan constitution and several Angolan statutes guarantee equal rights to men and women, those rights are not enforced consistently. The reason is due to traditional customs, a weak formal judicial system (see *Political and Social Relations*), and lack of legal prowess among some women. Although the Family Code allows married couples to own property jointly, it offers no guidelines for dividing that property in the event of death or divorce. Since women traditionally are not considered property owners, some divorcees and widows are forced to forfeit their share of joint property.

Gender and Politics

Angolan women are legally entitled to participate in politics on an equal basis with men. Since the elections of August 2012, women have held 75 of 220 seats (34%) in Angola's National Assembly (see *Political and Social Relations*)—nearly double the rate in the US House of Representatives (18%). In addition, 6 Angolan women serve as governors or vice governors, while 20 hold executive-level roles, including as Cabinet ministers. Still, only a small minority of women participate in political life. Most women, especially in rural areas, are more concerned with securing basic needs than with participating in politics.

Women's Organizations

During the civil war (see *History and Myth*), there were women's organizations affiliated with each side of the conflict—the Organization for Angolan Women (OMA) on the MPLA's side, and the Independence League for Angolan Women (LIMA) on UNITA's side. Members of both groups rallied support for their sides, served as nurses and spies, and brought provisions to the front lines. Despite their efforts, many women were victims of combatant sexual or physical abuse. At the war's end, women received little recognition or demobilization benefits—such as money, food, or training—that were offered to some men.

Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Although rape is a felony punishable by 8 years' imprisonment in Angola, few cases are prosecuted due to the police's lack of forensic investigative capabilities and the weak judicial system. In addition, many women do not report GBV in order to avoid the stigma associated with being a victim of sexual violence.

Violence against women appears to have increased since the 1990s. A 2007 study revealed 78% of all women in the capital city Luanda had experienced violence by age 15—usually from significant others. While in 2010 the Luanda police reported 831 cases of domestic violence, the true prevalence of GBV is thought to be much higher than these statistics indicate.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The practice of modifying the female sex organ in order to reduce sexual pleasure and promote virginity, FGM is common in many parts of Africa but rare in Angola. At most, a few ethnic groups in rural areas practice FGM.

Sex and Procreation

Angolans traditionally have viewed sex from a Christian perspective, according to which extramarital sex is forbidden and infidelity grounds for divorce. Although views have softened in modern Angola, female adultery remains a serious and socially unacceptable offense.

As Angolan women are expected to bear large numbers of children (see *Family and Kinship*), birth control is rare. According to a 2011 study, only 6% of Angolan women use contraceptives. In addition, despite an attempt to relax abortion laws in 2012, abortion remains illegal in Angola unless the mother's life is in danger.

Gender and HIV/AIDS

In Angola the HIV/AIDS epidemic (see *Sustenance and Health*) disproportionately affects women for two main reasons. First, because of the patriarchal nature of Angolan society, women usually are not able to insist on condom use or refuse sex to husbands or boyfriends who may have many sexual partners. Second, women are more likely to serve as caretakers for HIV-infected family members and therefore are more likely to be exposed to the disease.

Homosexuality

Homosexuality is both illegal and socially unacceptable in Angola. Many homosexual Angolans marry members of the opposite sex and live as heterosexuals in order to hide their sexual orientation. For many Angolan homosexuals, their defining characteristic is displaying mannerisms of the opposite sex rather than actually showing an attraction for members of the same sex. Consequently, Angolans may consider themselves straight even if they have occasional sexual contact with members of the same sex.

6. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Language Overview
At least 40 different languages and dialects are spoken in Angola, although none as a first language by a majority of the population. Portuguese, which became the official language after independence (see *History and Myth*), helps unify the population. It is typically more common in urban than rural areas due to its official use. Since the end of the civil war (see *History and Myth*), some of Angola's indigenous languages have been added to the public school curriculum (see *Learning and Knowledge*) in recognition of Angola's heritage.

Bantu Languages
In the home, most Angolans speak languages belonging to the Bantu branch of the Niger-Congo family. Typically, these "Bantu" languages include several dialects having had no written form until relatively recently. Most major ethnic groups in Angola (see *Political and Social Relations*) speak Bantu languages specific to their ethnic identity. The Bantu languages spoken most widely in Angola are Umbundu, Kimbundu, and Kikongo.

Umbundu: Spoken by nearly 7 million Angolans, Umbundu is Angola's most widely spoken Bantu language. Although Umbundu is spoken primarily by the Ovimbundu ethnic group, many Angolans of other ethnicities can understand some of the language, even if they do not speak it fluently.

Kimbundu: As the primary language of the Mbundu ethnic group, Kimbundu is spoken by about 4.6 million Angolans. Due to the high concentration of Mbundu in cities, Kimbundu speakers are more likely to speak Portuguese as a second language than speakers of other Bantu languages.

Kikongo: Around 2.5 million Angolans belonging mostly to the Kongo ethnic group speak Kikongo. The language is also spoken widely in the neighboring Democratic Republic of the

Congo (DRC). Of note, some Kikongo dialects are not always mutually intelligible.

Khwe

A few Angolans speak non-Bantu indigenous languages, of which the most widely spoken is Khwe. It belongs to the Khoisan language family and was spoken by fewer than 1,000 Angolans in 2000. Although they are small in number, Khwe speakers are the descendants of the Khoisan, who were probably Angola's earliest inhabitants (see *Political and Social Relations*). Khwe and other Khoisan languages are known for their incorporation of clicking sounds into words.

Portuguese

Introduced by colonists in the late 15th century (see *History and Myth*), Portuguese remains the official language of Angola. Although the language was taught in Angolan schools as early as 1605, for many years formal Portuguese instruction was available only to a small number of indigenous Angolans (see *Learning and Knowledge*). Consequently, a small elite group of Portuguese-speaking Angolans eventually emerged and came to dominate business, education, and politics, thereby creating a basis for the language's enduring prominence in Angola.

Today, Portuguese seems to be growing, particularly among younger Angolans who use the language almost exclusively, although they often incorporate words and pronunciations from Bantu languages. Older Angolans may speak and understand Portuguese but often prefer Bantu languages due to the legacy of colonial oppression associated with Portuguese.

English

While English historically has not been influential in Angola, it has gained popularity in recent years. One reason for this change is that some refugees learned the language while living in other countries during the civil war. Another reason is that many urban jobs in the business sector require English ability. Although English once was an elective, it is now a core subject in Angolan secondary schools (see *Learning and Knowledge*).

Naming Conventions

Angolans typically are called by a variety of names. Formal names usually are Portuguese versions of names of Catholic saints which typically supplement the last names of both parents. In addition, most Angolans give themselves a nickname or receive one from their community. For example, President José Eduardo dos Santos (see *Political and Social Relations*) is sometimes referred to as *Zedu* (a shortening of his first names), although this name sometimes is used derogatorily.

During the war for independence and the civil war, many people adopted false names to protect their families and themselves. Many of those false names reflected qualities or achievements of their ostensible bearers and became personal symbols therafter.

Communication Overview

Communicating competently with Angolans requires not just the ability to speak Portuguese, Umbundu, or another Bantu language, but also the ability to interact effectively using those languages. This notion of competence includes paralanguage (volume, rate of speech, intonation), nonverbal communication (personal space, touch, gestures), and interaction management (conversation initiation, turn-taking, termination). When used properly, these forms of communication ensure that statements are interpreted as the speaker intends.

Communication Style

Angolans tend to communicate in a formal manner. For example, they value proper greetings and consider it rude to interrupt. Urban Angolans tend to speak more loudly and in a friendlier manner than rural Angolans, who typically are reserved and quiet. Since Angolans are friendly and eager to please others, they may say "yes" to a request if they think the other person would be disappointed by a "no." To them, building trust is important when establishing relationships.

Greetings

Proper greetings are an important aspect of Angolan culture, although their significance has decreased to some extent in urban areas. When greeting groups, Angolans typically start by greeting the member who is most senior in age or rank and usually offer a slight bow as a sign of respect. Handshakes are the most common greeting, although they typically are gentler than those encountered in Western countries. Most Angolans expect greetings to include inquiries about wellbeing—a social politeness which should not be rushed (Photo: Former Angolan Minister of External Affairs Assunção Afonso dos Anjos greeting former US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton).

Forms of Address

Angolans address elders as *Kota* (Elder) or *Tio* (Uncle) for men and as *Mãe*, *Mamá* (Mother), or *Tia* (Aunt) for women. Angolans use these titles even if they are not related to the elder they are addressing. *Senhor* (Mr.) and *Senhora* (Mrs.), followed by the addressee's last name, are also appropriate and respectful titles. Government officials often are referred to as *Excelencia* (Excellency).

Gestures

Angolans often use physical gestures and become animated during conversations. As in Western cultures, the "thumbs up" sign means "okay." When greeting someone who is occupied, Angolans make eye contact and raise their hand with the palm up, with the recipient responding similarly. Angolans also communicate a similar message by raising both hands with the palm up as a gesture meaning "I would like to speak with you." Angolans consider it rude to point and may interpret it as a gesture of aggression. By contrast, spitting, nose-picking, and body-scratching are common and socially acceptable.

Language Training Resources

Please view the Air Force Culture and Language Center website at http://culture.af.mil/resources/index.aspx for language training resources.

Useful Translations

English	Portuguese
Hello	Olá
Hello/Good morning	Bom dia
Hello/Good afternoon	Boa tarde
Hello/Good evening	Boa noite
Good night (leaving)	Boa noite
Goodbye (Informal)	Adeu/Tchau
How are you?	Como está?
I am fine	Estou bem(boa)
What is your name?	Como se chama
My name is ___	Meu nome é ___
I am very pleased to meet you	Muito prazer em conhecê-lo
Yes/No	Sim/Não
Please	Se faz favor
Thank you	Obrigado (male)/Obrigada (female)
You're welcome (No problem)	De nada
Sorry/Excuse me	Desculpe-me
I do not understand	Eu não compreendo
Do you understand?	Entendeu?
Please speak more slowly	Fale mas devagar se faz favor
I do not speak Portuguese	Eu não falo Português
Do you speak English?	Fala Inglês?
Is there someone here who speaks English?	Há aqui alguém que fale Inglês?
Who?	Quem?
What?	O quê?
When?	Quando?
Where?	Onde?
Why?	Por quê?
How?	Como?
Help!	Socorro!
Turn right	Vire à direita
Turn left	Vire à esquerda
Straight ahead	Em frente
Stop!	Pare! (formal)/Pára (informal)/Parem(plural)

7. LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE

Literacy
- Total population over age 15 who can read and write: 70%
- Male: 83%
- Female: 58% (2010 estimate)

Traditional Education
In traditional Angolan society, all family members—including parents, uncles, aunts, grandparents, and even older siblings—had a responsibility to help transmit the accumulated knowledge and skills of the community to younger generations. Even unrelated residents of the same village played a role, as all community members traditionally were considered jointly responsible for nurturing local children. This traditional model for education has faded, however, as extended families have dispersed or moved to urban areas.

In the traditional, communal model, education was transmitted through stories, proverbs, fables, and legends (see *History and Myth*). These forms of literature taught both factual history and mythical stories designed to convey moral lessons. Initiation rites were also an important means of perpetuating morals and values. For example, members of the Bakongo ethnic group (see *Political and Social Relations*) traditionally learned proper forms of adult behavior—such as controlling one's emotions—during initiation ceremonies (see *Family and Kinship*).

History of Formal Education
Jesuit priests established the first Western-style formal schools in Angola in 1605. Their intention was to spread the Portuguese language and train Africans for membership in the clergy. In the course of pursuing these goals, missionaries also spread ideas of which the colonial administration did not approve. For example, Jesuit teachings empowered Africans and promoted equality. Consequently, in 1760 the Jesuits were forced to leave Angola and their schools were abandoned.

The next serious attempt to bring formal education to Angola did not occur until more than a century later, when Christian missionaries from France, Canada, and the US—including both Catholics and Protestants—established schools in the 1870s. Around that time, some of the Protestant missionaries devised a written form of the Umbundu language (see *Language and Communication*), which they taught to their African students and used to print educational and religious documents.

As colonial administrators began to sense that the non-Portuguese outsiders were undermining their rule, they expanded their control over Angola's formal education in the early 20th century. In 1922 the administration declared that education must be conducted in Portuguese by officially licensed instructors. Many of the mission schools, especially in rural areas, could not meet the requirement and therefore were forced to close. In 1940 the administration transferred control over formal education, as well as some funding, to the Catholic Church (The stamp represents Portuguese involvement in Angola's educational system).

This change resulted in little educational reform until Angola became an Overseas Province of Portugal in 1951 (see *History and Myth*). After this latter change—which theoretically gave all Angolans a path to Portuguese citizenship—the Portuguese government established ***ensinos da adaptação*** (adaptation schools) and public primary schools.

Adaptation schools were intended for "uncivilized" Angolans, who had to complete 2 years of adaptation school and pass a final exam before they could enroll in primary school. Since there were few adaptation schools, most Angolans were not able to qualify for public education.

In general, only the children of ***mestiços*** (Angolans of mixed Afro-Portuguese descent) and ***assimilados*** (Angolans—both Africans and ***mestiços***—who adopted the culture, language, and values of the Portuguese) were able to access Angola's public education system (see *History and Myth*).

Education after Independence

When Angola attained independence in 1975, the government began building a free and compulsory public education system. The country's top educational priorities were to train teachers, expand literacy, and improve Angola's education infrastructure. The government both imported teachers from abroad and sent Angolan teachers to receive training in other countries.

Enrollment increased slowly during the 1970s, but the civil war gradually took a heavier toll, preventing many students from going to school during the 1980s and 1990s. More than 1,500 classrooms were destroyed, while thousands of teachers and families were displaced. During this period, the government spent far more on the military than on improving the education system. Consequently, quality of education remained low.

Modern Education System

Due to the civil war legacy, levels of both literacy and educational attainment remain low in Angola, particularly in rural areas. Most Angolans do not receive any schooling past the primary level.

Primary: Starting at age 6, 8 years of primary school are free and compulsory for all Angolan children. However, only about 1/3 of students who enroll reach the 5th grade. In addition, the country's lack of qualified teachers and adequate educational facilities ensures that most classrooms are overcrowded, with some accommodating as many as 80 students. Some schools have attempted to address this problem by operating 2-3 short shifts per day, although teacher absenteeism limits progress.

Secondary: Secondary education starts at age 14 and offers 3 mutually exclusive tracks: 3 years of general education; 3 years of university preparation; or 4 years of vocational and technical training. In 2007 the World Bank estimated that Angola's 70 secondary schools had only 15% of primary school graduates enrolled. Many students forgo secondary school due to unaffordable fees and family responsibilities. Secondary schools often have poor sanitation and lack qualified teachers.

Tertiary: According to World Bank estimates, less than 1% of students—mostly from rich families—who finish secondary school in Angola aspire to study at a university. Many attend universities in Portugal or other countries in Europe, although there are a number of universities in Angola.

The first public university, ***Universidade de Agostinho Neto*** (UAN), which was founded in 1976 and named after the country's first President (see *History and Myth*) offers degrees in economics, education, engineering, law, medicine, and natural sciences. Although UAN is based in Luanda, it has branches in several cities. Private universities also have emerged in Angola since the 1990s, although they tend to be costly compared to regional averages. There were 16 private universities in 2011 (Photo: US Ambassador Christopher J. McMullen and Vice-Rector for Academics Dr. Maria Augusta Martins inaugurating an English Language Space at UAN).

Language of Instruction
Portuguese is the language of instruction at all levels in Angola, although adult education is available in indigenous languages. Since 2005, the government has experimented with offering instruction in 6 native languages—Kikongo, Kimbundu, and Umbundu, among others (see *Language and Communication*).

Other Education Programs
Angola has a range of non-formal educational programs, many of which were developed by or with the help of humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These non-traditional programs address such objectives as land mine awareness, teacher training, adult literacy, and agricultural development. They also offer vocational training to various groups, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), former child soldiers, and amputees. Some NGOs have begun to question the Angolan government's commitment to education and considered reallocating their resources to other countries.

8. TIME AND SPACE

Concept of Time

Most Angolans are warm, friendly people accustomed to living communally and harmoniously with the people around them. Perhaps due to their long experience with war, poverty, a relatively short lifespan (see *Sustenance and Health*), and other hardships, Angolans tend to live for the moment rather than worrying about the future.

Time and Work

The Angolan workweek extends from Monday through Friday. Workdays start early and are punctuated by a 2-hour meal break in the afternoon. Most businesses and government offices operate from 7:30am-12:30pm and then again from 2:30pm-6:30pm. Some businesses also open on Saturdays for half days. Banks typically open between 8:00am-11:00am and 2:00pm-3:00pm. Angolans who take vacation usually do so between June and September. Angola uses West Africa Time (WAT), which is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Time and Business

Since relationships are an important aspect of Angolan culture, they also comprise a basic component of business interactions. Business meetings tend to be formal and customarily begin and end with handshakes (see *Language and Communication*). Foreign nationals are advised to schedule business meetings as far as 1-2 months in advance and then confirm them by telephone 1-2 days before the actual meeting.

Punctuality

Like people from many parts of Africa, Angolans have a more relaxed view of time than Westerners. They consider it neither rude nor unusual to arrive late for social events or even for scheduled business meetings. Nevertheless, foreign nationals are expected to be punctual and should plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early for appointments.

Public Holidays

- January 1: New Year's Day
- January 4: Martyrs of Colonial Repression Day
- February 4: Liberation Movement Day
- March – April (variable): *Carnaval*
- March – April (variable): Good Friday
- March – April (variable): Easter
- March 8: International Women's Day
- April 4: Peace and National Reconciliation Day
- May 1: Labor Day
- September 17: National Heroes Day
- November 2: All Souls' Day
- November 11: Independence Day
- December 10: MPLA Founding Day
- December 25: Christmas Day

Holidays

Angolans observe both secular and religious public holidays (see "Public Holidays" above), during which they celebrate by gathering together to eat, drink, dance, and listen to speeches or sermons. In 2011, however, the Angolan National Assembly (see *Political and Social Relations*) passed a law that reduced the number of public holidays in an effort to boost productivity. The largest celebration is Christmas, although *Carnaval*, an Angolan version of Mardi Gras that involves multiple days of celebration, is also popular. On religious holidays, Angolans tend to wear their finest clothes and attend church services.

Personal Space

While having conversations, Angolans tend to stand or sit close to each other and often within what US citizens would consider personal space. Similarly, Angolans often make gestures (see *Language and Communication*) that may seem to violate a US citizen's personal space. Despite these facts, stepping back to create extra space is usually counterproductive, as Angolans may be offended or simply take another step to close the gap.

Touch

Most greetings are accompanied by some type of physical contact, such as a handshake, kiss, or hug. Men, for example, may pat each other's backs, while women may exchange cheek kisses. In rural areas, some women may avoid physical greetings and instead simply smile and nod when greeting others. Inhabitants of rural areas also tend to frown upon public displays of affection between couples. Despite this fact, members of the same gender commonly hold hands in public—a sign of non-romantic affection.

Eye Contact

Eye contact serves distinct purposes in different situations in Angola. Between 2 people of the same age or rank, direct eye contact indicates sincerity. By contrast, avoidance of direct eye contact with a superior indicates respect. Some rural women avoid direct eye contact with men and instead gaze toward the ground. Rural Angolans of both genders may find direct eye contact uncomfortable, perceiving they are being examined.

Left Hand Taboo

As in many parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East—particularly in Muslim societies—the left hand is considered unclean and used only for personal hygiene in Angola. Foreign nationals are advised to use their right hand when passing objects or shaking hands. Since Angola is not a predominantly Muslim society, the left-hand tradition is not as pronounced as in Muslim countries. Generally, a simple apology is sufficient when a person must use the left hand in a social situation.

Photographs

Foreign nationals are advised to ask permission before taking photographs of Angolans, noting that Angolans may expect monetary compensation or a copy of the photograph in return. Taking photographs of government facilities or other public infrastructure may be seen as suspicious and could lead to interrogation or arrest.

9. AESTHETICS AND RECREATION

Overview
Due both to Portugal's long colonial occupation of Angola and Angola's strong cultural ties to Brazil and the Caribbean, the dress, recreation, music, and arts of Angola contain elements of both indigenous and these external cultures.

Dress and Appearance
Angolans place a high premium on maintaining a well-groomed appearance, traditionally regarding dress as a reflection of individual character and, in some cases, a symbol of ethnic identity. Accordingly, Angolans usually reserve their best attire for special occasions.

Traditional: Traditional Angolan clothing is usually fashioned from woven cotton, although some ethnic groups traditionally have worn clothing made from animal skins. Male attire consists of an apron-style garment worn without a shirt, while the female outfit includes a headscarf and a *panos*, a patterned, brightly colored wraparound skirt.

For both sexes, traditional Angolan styles also include a variety of body adornments, such as hair frills, headdresses, masks, arm bands, chalk or charcoal markings, and patterned scars. While some adornments are meant to enhance beauty or signify social status, others have practical uses. For example, some Angolan women traditionally covered themselves with a mixture of red ochre (a powdered mineral pigment) and animal fat in order to protect their skin from the sun.

Modern: In casual contexts, most men wear a t-shirt or sports jersey with Western-style pants or jeans. In more formal contexts, men tend to wear suits. Women usually wear a blouse with a Western-style skirt, dress, or jeans in both formal and casual contexts. Many women also braid their hair or wear bracelets, necklaces, and other jewelry.

Recreation

Traditionally, one of the most common Angolan pastimes was listening to village elders recount folktales (see *History and Myth*). Another traditional pastime among women was chatting while braiding each other's hair or knitting. Visiting friends and relatives, however, is probably the most popular and enduring of the country's traditional pastimes, as Angolans typically take any opportunity to socialize. In urban Angola, this love of socializing is visible not only in bustling Luanda dance clubs but also at elaborate, all-night parties that wealthy Angolans often host.

Sports and Games

Football: As Angola's national sport, football (soccer) is popular among boys and girls of all ages who play in informal settings and on local teams. While even small matches can draw large crowds, perhaps the largest attraction is the *Palancas Negras* ("Black Antelopes"), the country's national team. In 2006 the *Palancas Negras* made their first appearance in the FIFA World Cup.

Basketball: In recent years basketball has enjoyed a surge of popularity in Angola, a trend that has coincided with success on the part of the country's professional teams. Perhaps the most successful team has been *Primeiro de Agosto* ("First of August"), which is based in Luanda and has won FIBA's Africa Clubs Champions Cup 7 times in the past 10 years.

Other Sports: Bicycling, golf, handball, martial arts, swimming, track and field, and volleyball are also popular sports in Angola. Since many of these sports require costly equipment or facilities, they are prohibitive for many Angolans.

Games: Angolans play *mancala*, a traditional game that involves moving seeds or pebbles on a board having 12 holes with the goal of capturing the other player's seeds. Some variations of *mancala* are known as *ware*, *kiela*, *leuli*, and *mwendo*. Chess is also popular in Angola.

Music

Angolan music is a blend of traditional, modern, and foreign influences, particularly from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Music and Society

Since the late colonial era, there have been strong links between war, politics, and music in Angola. In the years leading up to independence, for example, many Angolan musicians wrote songs that strongly criticized the colonial government. The government regarded many of those musicians as radicals and jailed or exiled them. Perhaps the most famous of Angola's "radical" musicians was Bonga, who fled to the Netherlands in 1966. He later recorded albums whose seditious nature prompted Portugal to issue an arrest warrant, forcing Bonga to move frequently between different locations in Europe.

In recent years, music has helped promote peace and reconciliation. Many musical artists and groups, including Waldemar Bastos and *As Gingas du Maculusso* (a group sometimes called the "Angolan Spice Girls"), have focused on messages of peace. Perhaps the most famous demonstration of this sentiment was "*A Paz é que o Povo Chiama*" ("The People are Calling for Peace"), a song produced by 35 musicians to encourage an end to the civil war.

Traditional: Music traditionally has played an important role in nearly all life events in Angola, including naming ceremonies, weddings, coronations, funerals, and celebrations (see *Family and Kinship*). The music at these ceremonies includes special songs that are accompanied by specific traditional instruments. For example, the Yaka people of northern Angola historically have used slit drums known as *grouls* during ancestor worship ceremonies (see *Religion and Spirituality*). Similarly, a type of thumb piano called a *kisanji* is plucked to provide background music for folktales among some Angolan ethnic groups.

Modern: Today Angolans enjoy genres ranging from reggae and hip-hop to blues and American pop, and much of the more popular music blends components of modern with traditional. For example, a group called ***Ngola Ritmos*** ("Angolan Rhythms") rose to fame in the 1940s for songs that combined guitar with traditional conga drums. More recently, ***kuduru***—a blend of hip-hop and Angolan rhythms—has become popular. In recent years, some Angolan rappers have found themselves

at odds with the authorities after rapping about corruption (see *Political and Social Relations*).

Dance
A common saying about Angola holds that where there is music, there also is dance. Indeed, dancing historically has gone hand-in-hand with the music that accompanies traditional ceremonies. A dance called ***mukishi***, for example, historically has been used both to calm and entertain prospective initiates at *mukanda* ceremonies (see *Family and Kinship*). In modern Angola, a variety of dance forms have evolved to play similar ceremonial roles or simply to entertain.

Semba*:** Dating to the 1600s, ***semba originally was used to celebrate weddings and good harvests. It is a fast partner dance that is said to be the precursor to the Brazilian samba.

Capoeira*:** It is mix of dance, gymnastics, and martial arts, whereby dancers appear to be fighting acrobatically, although without physical contact. Angolan slaves created ***capoeira in the 1500s as a method to train covertly for combat.

Rebita*:** Created in the 1930s, ***rebita combines European and African styles. Partners dance in a circle and perform traditional African movements, such as the ***umbigada*** ("belly bounce").

Other Dance Styles: Angolans enjoy many other dance styles. Other fast dance styles include ***kabateula***, an acrobatic dance, and ***kazukuta***, a combination of hip-hop and tap dance that involves exaggerated arm movements. Slower, more sensual dances include ***kizomba*** and ***tarrachinha***.

Theater and Cinema

Theater is underdeveloped in Angola. The colonial government barred performance art that featured traditional African themes and instead used theater to teach Christianity. In the Christian plays, black Africans were cast in the role of the villain, while whites were cast in the role of the hero. Still, indigenous Angolan playwrights created a number of controversial works in the years before independence. For example, Domingos Van-Dúnem's **Auto de Natal** ("Christmas Play") was an Umbundu-language work that criticized the prominence of the Portuguese language in Angola.

Literature

Since the indigenous languages of Angola did not have written forms until relatively recently, the traditional literature of Angola consists mostly of folklore (see *History and Myth*). Portuguese-language works emerged during the colonial era. Many writers including Agostinho Neto—who later became the first President of Angola—and Pepetela were active in the independence movement, expressing their views in popular literary works. Since independence, Angolan literature has reflected Angola's ongoing conflict, corruption, and poverty.

Arts and Crafts

Angolan arts and crafts historically have served both spiritual and practical ends. Spiritually, masks and statues (pictured) were used for initiation ceremonies and ancestor worship (see *Religion and Spirituality*). Similarly, professional artisans made scepters, carved thrones for kings, and sculptures of warriors or healers. By contrast, pottery most often consisted of household items such as water jugs or cooking utensils. During the colonial era, European and Christian themes began to influence art in Angola, as seen in the appearance of crucifixes and Portuguese decorative motifs. In modern Angola, few people can afford handmade goods or artwork. Consequently, most of Angola's arts and handicrafts are sold at tourist markets (so-called "airport art") or displayed in foreign galleries or museums.

10. SUSTENANCE AND HEALTH

Sustenance Overview
Angolan cuisine has been influenced heavily by those of Brazil, Portugal, and other foreign countries. Food choices and means of preparation vary regionally, depending on availability of ingredients and cultural preferences. Since much of Angola's farmland was destroyed or littered with land mines during the civil war, the country now imports more than half of its food.

Dining Customs
In rural parts of Angola, most people eat with their hands. Food is transferred from a communal bowl to individual plates using a large spoon. By contrast, urban Angolans more often use utensils. In all parts of Angola, elders are served first, followed by guests, who usually are served the best portion. In most cases, guests also are offered the last of the available food; however, it is customary for the guest to decline initially and then accept after the offer has been repeated once or twice.

Diet
Most Angolans get the bulk of their calories from starches, vegetables, and fruits. Starch types tend to vary by region. In northern Angola, the most common starch is *funje*, a paste made from a fibrous tuber known as cassava or manioc. In southern Angola, a cornmeal porridge known as *pirao* is more popular. Angolans also get starch from rice and sweet potatoes.

The vegetables that appear most commonly in Angolan dishes include tomatoes, onions, okra, eggplant, lettuce, and *jimbôa*, a term that refers to the leaves of a local species of amaranth. Known for its high levels of protein, *jimbôa* is prepared and eaten like sautéed spinach. Popular fruits include avocados, bananas, mangos, oranges, and papayas. Angolans also enjoy *mucua*, a fruit with pink and white flesh that comes from the *baobab* tree. *Mucua* is popular with children and is commonly made into ice cream or juice.

Meals and Popular Dishes

Most Angolans eat 3 meals-per-day. Breakfast, which is known as *mata-bicho* ("kills the beast" in Portuguese) often includes bread, eggs, and coffee or tea. Among southern Angolans, the morning meal sometimes consists of *tchisangua*, a drink made from water, ground cornmeal, and sugar. In northern Angola, peanuts and cassava are a popular morning meal. Lunch is traditionally the largest meal, while dinner sometimes consists of nothing more than leftovers from lunch.

Main dishes typically consist of a protein, such as chicken or seafood, along with a starch or vegetables. Some of the more common main dishes include *muamba de galinha*, or chicken cooked in palm oil, garlic, and spices and served with beans or *funje*; *muffete*, or grilled fish and beans cooked in palm oil with boiled sweet potatoes and plantains; and *arroz de marisco*, a dish of prawns or squid served with rice. Another popular poultry dish is *galinha de cabidela*, which consists of chicken cooked in vinegar and its own blood and served with tomatoes, onion, garlic, rice, and *funje*.

Regional specialties include *chikuanga*, which is common in the Northeast and consists of cassava-flour bread wrapped in banana leaves, and *gafanhotos de palmeira*, which is popular in Kwanza Norte province and contains toasted grasshoppers served with *funje*.

Beverages

Angolans consume a wide range of soft drinks, such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Fanta, and Mirinda, a fruit-flavored soda most often sold in orange flavor. Angolans also enjoy a variety of local alcoholic drinks, including *maluvu* (palm wine) and *kissangua orocissangua*, a drink made from fermented maize (corn) flour. Also popular in Angola is a palm nut beer known as Mongozo, which traditionally is served in a calabash (dried and hollowed gourd). Mongozo became known in Europe when an Angolan refugee named Henrique Kabila began brewing the drink in Belgium in the 1990s.

Health Overview

Despite modest improvements since the end of the civil war, the state of healthcare in Angola is poor. At just 55 years, the life expectancy at birth of an average Angolan is among the lowest in the world and almost 23 years lower than that of the average US citizen. Meanwhile, the country's infant and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the world. About 1 in 4 children does not reach age 5. While the government has tried to improve facilities and treatment options, Angola's healthcare infrastructure remains weak.

Traditional Medicine

Derived from the beliefs, theories, and experiences of indigenous populations; traditional medicine comprises knowledge, skills, and practices that are used to pursue holistic health. In Angola, healthcare historically has been the responsibility of *kimbandas* (traditional healers—see *Religion and Spirituality*). Since Angolans traditionally believed that illness resulted from negative behaviors—such as quarreling with family members—or evil spirits, it was the role of *kimbandas* to purify people and treat their symptoms.

Many Angolans still consult *kimbandas*, often applying their remedies in conjunction with those of modern, Western-style medicine. *Kimbandas* have an extensive knowledge of herbal medicine and a variety of spiritual rituals for treating everything from headaches to mental illness, although their treatments vary widely. Some treatments, for example, involve the patient ingesting or bathing in liquids infused with plants or spices while the *kimbanda* tries to communicate with ancestral spirits.

Modern Healthcare System

Around 1,500 hospitals and clinics were destroyed during the civil war, and by 2002 there were only 79 hospitals, 245 health centers, and 1,048 medical posts in Angola. Although those numbers had increased to 163, 313, and 1,468, respectively, by 2008, facilities remained concentrated near urban centers. Consequently, rural Angolans still must travel long distances to visit facilities that in many cases lack necessary supplies.

In addition, many health facilities in Angola lack trained medical personnel, partly because large numbers of doctors fled Angola during the civil war. Despite governmental attempts to lure doctors back to Angola, the country still has only 8 physicians per 100,000 people—less than half the ratio recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Even many Angolans who live near adequate medical facilities cannot afford their services. Angola has no national health insurance system, and until recently, even private coverage was unavailable although some employers subsidized employees' healthcare costs. Consequently, most Angolans who receive healthcare either pay out-of-pocket or rely upon humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Health Challenges

Malnutrition: A 2011 study found that 27% of Angolans do not eat enough calories to meet their daily needs. Many children suffer from *kwashiorkor*, a condition caused by inadequate protein intake, or *marasmus*, a condition caused by insufficient caloric intake.

Infectious Disease: In 2012 approximately 19,000 Angolans were infected with malaria, which is endemic to the country and is the top cause of death in women and children. Angola also has high rates of yellow fever, measles, rabies, and leprosy. The government and foreign NGOs have partnered to provide education, vaccinations, and treatment for many diseases, yet outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and polio still occur.

HIV/AIDS: The prevalence of HIV is relatively low in Angola, where only 2% of the population—as opposed to 5% in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole—is infected with the virus. This low rate is often attributed to the civil war, which limited population movement and thus the spread of HIV. Still, some observers note that current circumstances are ripe for an HIV epidemic in Angola, which is now reabsorbing refugees from HIV-ridden countries and also has a young, mobile population that has not been educated about avoiding high-risk sexual behaviors.

11. ECONOMICS AND RESOURCES

Overview

Angola is one of Africa's most resource-rich countries, having vast tracts of farmland, extensive waterways teeming with fish, abundant mineral deposits, and the world's 16th largest oil reserves. For most of the country's post-independence history, the bulk of the proceeds from its natural endowment have been spent on military expenses related to the civil war.

Since the end of the civil war, the Angolan economy has begun to recover, enabled not only by the gradual reduction of war-related expenses but also by policies that have liberalized the economy and spurred growth. Between 2002—the year the civil war ended—and 2011, the Angolan economy grew at an average rate of 11.4% per year, although rates in any given year varied widely, ranging from 2.4% to 22.6%. Economic reforms, such as privatizing state-owned firms, have helped to increase foreign investment, limit inflation, and bring greater—though still imperfect—transparency to government finances.

Despite these improvements, the Angolan economy still faces a number of problems. For example, since domestic economic activities are concentrated in the oil industry, there exists a negligible manufacturing or commercial agricultural base, compelling Angola to import most necessities. Corruption is another problem. While high-level officials find creative ways of skimming oil revenues and giving contracts to private-sector cronies, many low-level officials refuse to perform their duties unless they receive a *gasosa*—a "soft drink," or small bribe.

Due to these and other concerns, the vast majority of Angolans remain desperately poor, despite the success of those at the top. Approximately 4/5 of the population lives in poverty, while the government spares little money for public services that could help them improve their condition.

Industry

Although industrial activities contributed 61% of Angola's GDP in 2011 and constitute the largest sector by far of the country's economy, they employ only a small number of Angolans.

Oil: Angola is the 3rd largest oil producer in Africa and the 17th largest in the world, generating 1.8 million barrels daily and having 15 billion barrels of proven reserves. Most of the country's oil reserves are located offshore near Cabinda and Luanda in the Northwest (Photo: An offshore oil rig near Luanda being prepared for deployment to deep sea waters). Sonangol, a state-owned enterprise, manages Angola's oil industry, although foreign firms such as BP, ExxonMobil, and Texaco handle most production since they can afford to fund deep sea drilling. Angola became a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 2007.

Diamonds: Angola is the world's 5th largest diamond producer after Botswana, Russia, Canada, and South Africa. Most of the country's known diamond reserves are located in central and northeastern Angola. The state-owned Sodiam enterprise controls some aspects of the diamond industry, although foreign firms conduct most production. These companies are well-established and can afford the large capital expenditures needed to exploit "Kimberlite" tubes—the most lucrative type of deposit. Illegally mined diamonds were a main source of financing for UNITA during the civil war (see *History and Myth*).

Other Minerals: Angola has commercially exploitable deposits of several minerals, including bauxite, copper, gold, granite, iron ore, manganese, phosphates, platinum, zinc, and uranium.

Manufacturing: Although Angolan manufacturing underwent severe disruptions during the civil war, the country now has a small manufacturing base in Luanda. Goods manufactured in Angola include cement, glass, metalwork, processed food and beverages, textiles, tobacco, and sugar.

Agriculture

Although agriculture accounted for just 10% of GDP in 2011, most Angolans earn their livelihood through agricultural activities, of which the most common is subsistence farming. Main food crops include cassava (a fibrous root), corn, plantains (a starchy type of banana), and sweet potatoes, while the primary cash crop is coffee. Other cash crops include cotton, sisal (a fiber used to make twine), sugarcane, tobacco, and a variety of vegetables.

Livestock: Livestock husbandry has been limited in Angola by the prevalence of the tse-tse fly, which infects vertebrates with an often fatal illness. Still, some cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowl are raised in the central highlands and the Southwest.

Fishing: Due to its long coastline and many rivers, Angola has a large fishing industry. The country's seafood exports include mackerel, sardines, shellfish, and tuna. While Angola has thousands of fishing villages, foreign firms control the industry.

Forestry: Angola has a thriving timber industry that primarily produces valuable hardwoods, including cypress, eucalyptus, ebony, mahogany, sandalwood, and teak. Forests cover about 1/5 of Angola, most notably in northern Angola and Cabinda.

Services

Although the services sector accounted for 28% of Angola's GDP in 2011, it employed only a small fraction of the labor force. The main activity in the sector is small-scale retail trade, which is often conducted through unregulated gray and black markets. Women control the trade in food and firewood, while men dominate the trade in arms, diamonds, and spare parts.

Tourism: Although Angolan tourism has been stifled by civil war and poverty, the industry has potential. Attractions include the *Ilha do Mussulo* (Isle of Mussulo), known for its beaches; the *Ilha de Luanda* (Isle of Luanda), popular for its clubs and restaurants; and Kissama National Park, which is located about 45 mi south of Luanda and is home to a range of wildlife.

Currency

The currency of Angola is the *kwanza* (Kz), which subdivides into 100 *cêntimos*. The *kwanza* is issued in 5 coins (Kz 0.1, 0.5, 1, 2, 5) and 7 banknotes (Kz 10, 50, 100, 200, 500, 1,000, 5,000). Although the value of the *kwanza* fluctuated wildly during the civil war, thereafter it became more stable. Between 2008 and 2013, US$1 was worth an average of about Kz 87, although the value of the *kwanza* in US dollars steadily declined by about 1/4 during that period. As in many countries with unstable currencies, the US dollar is also used in Angola.

Foreign Trade

Angola's exports totaled $72 billion in 2012, primarily consisting of crude oil. The largest purchasers of Angolan goods included China (36%), the US (19%), India (11%), Taiwan (8%), and Canada (7%). Angola's imports totaled $22 billion in 2012 and consisted of goods such as food, textiles, vehicles, and medicine. Angola's main suppliers were Portugal (17%), South Korea (11%), the Netherlands (9%), China (9%), and the US (8%) (Photo: Angola's commercial port at Namibe).

China: Following an expansion of trading ties in recent years, Angola is now China's largest African trading partner. China is attracted to Angola's oil and minerals, while Angola is receptive to China because the Asian power offers financial, military, and technical assistance. Still, some Angolans resent the presence of Chinese laborers in their country because they presumably perform shoddy work and displace local laborers.

Foreign Aid

In 2011 Angola received disbursements of official development assistance (ODA) worth approximately $253 million, of which about 2/3 came from single-country donors and 1/3 from multilateral institutions. The largest donor was the US, which disbursed almost 1/3 of all ODA. Other large single-country donors included Portugal (8%), South Korea (7%), Norway (5%), and Japan (5%). The largest multilateral donor was the European Union, which disbursed about 11% of all ODA.

12. TECHNOLOGY AND MATERIAL

Overview
Although large parts of Angola's infrastructure were destroyed or damaged during the country's long civil war (see *History and Myth*), efforts to restore and expand the country's roadways, railways, and ports are now underway, often with the help of oil-backed loans from China (see *Economics and Resources*).

Transportation
For travel within towns, most Angolans walk, ride bicycles, or use public transit. In urban areas, they sometimes use share taxis—known locally as **candongeiros**—which in most cases are privately run Toyota vans painted blue and white (pictured in the lower right corner). For travel between towns, most Angolans rely upon buses. For example, there is a daily bus service that connects the 375-mi coastal route between Luanda and Benguela. Bus and automobile travel has become more popular as the cessation of civil war hostilities has eased security concerns. Some wealthier Angolans have private cars.

Roadways: Angola has about 32,000 mi of roadways, of which 10% are paved. Although roads between major cities generally are adequate, other roads are often in dangerously poor condition. Many roads are susceptible to flooding and potholes during the rainy season, while some rural roads are still studded with active land mines remaining from the civil war (see *Political and Social Relations*). Even roads in Luanda tend to be substandard, a problem that has become more serious in recent years as car ownership and congestion have increased.

Even aside from the poor state of the country's roads, driving in Angola tends to be hazardous. Many intersections lack signals, few roads have traffic signs, and police rarely supervise traffic. In urban areas, small vehicles and pedestrians tend to mingle freely with car traffic, creating a significant risk of accidents.

Railways: Angola has slightly more than 1,700 mi of railways. The largest single rail line is the Benguela Railway, which at its peak stretched 850 mi between the port of Lobito (see below) and the mines near Angola's eastern border. Although it has been in a state of disrepair since the civil war, work is now underway to rehabilitate the Benguela Railway with the help of Chinese loans (see *Economics and Resources*).

Waterways and Ports: Angola has about 800 mi of navigable waterways, although inland waterborne trade is limited mostly to the Congo River on the country's northern frontier. Its major port is Lobito, located slightly north of Benguela about halfway along Angola's coast. Luanda also has a natural harbor, although the poor condition of its facilities has limited the amount of trade it attracts. Other ports are used for more specialized purposes. For instance, Namibe is the center of the fishing industry, while Cabinda is the hub for oil shipments.

Airways: Angola is home to 176 airports, of which 30 have paved runways. The main transit hub is *Aeroporto Quatro de Fevereiro* (4th of February Airport), which is located in Luanda and named for the date when Angola began its struggle for independence (see *History and Myth*). There are smaller airports in many provincial capitals, including Benguela, Cabinda, Huambo, Malanje, and Namibe. Air transit historically has been important for Angolan industry and elites due to the danger and difficulty of overland travel during the civil war.

Energy

Angola's energy infrastructure is poor. Few rural dwellers have access to the electrical grid, and even service for urban dwellers is unreliable. While Angola is one of Africa's largest oil producers, the country has only a single refinery and therefore must import most of its petroleum products, such as diesel and gasoline. Nevertheless, Angola has the potential to generate large amounts of hydropower from its river system. Although much of the necessary infrastructure was damaged during the civil war, projects are now underway to repair and expand it.

Media

Although Angola's constitution guarantees free expression, the country's long experience with censorship under Portuguese rule did not end after independence. During the civil war, for example, the government reportedly used a range of tactics, including arbitrary detention and illegal killings, to intimidate reporters. Some progress, such as a 2005 law that liberalized press regulations, has been made since the end of the civil war, but it remains to be seen whether that progress will last.

Print Media: The only national newspaper published on a daily basis in Angola is the state-owned *Jornal de Angola*. Private weekly newspapers include *Comércio Actualidade*, *Folha 8*, *Agora*, *O Pais*, and *Apostolado*, the last of which is published by the Catholic Church.

Radio and TV: The Angolan government operates national TV and radio stations called *Televisão Popular de Angola* (TPA) and *Radio Nacional de Angola* (RNA), which both broadcast different types of content through multiple channels. Popular private stations include TV Zimbo and Radio Mais, as well as Radio Ecclesia, which is run by the Catholic Church.

Telecommunications

Due partly to extensive damage to Angola's landline system during the civil war, mobile phones have emerged as a more popular alternative. In 2011 the number of mobile subscriptions was more than 30 times higher than those for fixed line, with a total ratio of about 1 mobile subscription for every 2 Angolans—a 125-fold increase since 2001 when the government ended its telecommunications monopoly.

Internet: Broadband connections in Angola more than tripled between 2006 and 2011. Accordingly, many Angolan news outlets and government agencies have rushed to establish an online presence in recent years. Due to lack of access, however, less than 15% of Angolans used the Internet in 2011. Government concerns about unregulated information flows also have discouraged Internet expansion.

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